

*Illinois  
Statewide  
Comprehensive  
Outdoor  
Recreation  
Plan  
2003-2008*





# ILLINOIS STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN 2003-2008

Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
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## *chapter 1*

# *Introduction*

**T**he Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a guide and a vision for outdoor recreation in Illinois. It is required to maintain Illinois' eligibility for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a federal program that provides 50 percent matching funds for acquisition and development of outdoor recreation lands and facilities. States can either spend the funds on state projects or grant them to local units of government. In Illinois, a partnership has developed between state and local government which has greatly expanded outdoor recreation opportunities available to communities. Since 1965, the LWCF has allocated nearly \$140 million to Illinois, bringing the total spent on outdoor recreation to more than \$280 million.

LWCF funding levels have fluctuated over time, and state programs and funds are not adequate to meet the many acquisition, development, and operation needs for park and recreation facilities. Therefore, stable LWCF funding is vital to continue offering high quality green space and recreation that is resource compatible and easily available to all citizens of Illinois.

The SCORP is a five-year plan that includes an assessment of the state's natural resources; demographic trends; outdoor recreation demand, supply and needs; and priorities for the LWCF Program. The SCORP also provides guidance for seven other state outdoor recreation grant programs, including the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Program, as well as the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR)

annual capital development program, site planning, and other outdoor recreation planning.

While IDNR is responsible for preparing Illinois' recreation plan, it works in conjunction with other state agencies as well as federal and local agencies responsible for outdoor recreation. The plan was developed using a variety of public participation mechanisms, including comments from state site visitors, IDNR's Conservation Congress, various state and federal recreation surveys, and public review of the draft SCORP. The Department's own strategic plan was also used to guide its direction and priorities.

The mission of the Department of Natural Resources is "to manage, protect, and sustain Illinois' natural and cultural resources; provide resource-compatible recreational opportunities; and promote natural resource-related public safety, education and science." To fulfill this mission the department acquires and manages thousands of acres of public land and, as mentioned above, provides grants to units of local government for a variety of open space and outdoor recreation purposes.

At its public sites it offers a wide diversity of outdoor recreation—from hunting to hiking, boating to bicycling. Traditionally, the natural resource-based recreational opportunities offered by the Department focus on statewide and regional needs not easily met by local governments and the private sector.

The demand for outdoor recreation is influenced to a great extent by changing demographics, land use patterns, and cultural attitudes. An emerging national health issue—inadequate physical activity and obesity—has placed renewed emphasis on the importance of providing recreational opportunities as a public service. Resources such as trail systems, greenways, and parks broaden public access to physical recreation and, therefore, to improved personal well-being. These

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2.6 million people in Illinois participated in at least one type of wildlife-watching activity including observing, feeding, or photographing wildlife in 2001.

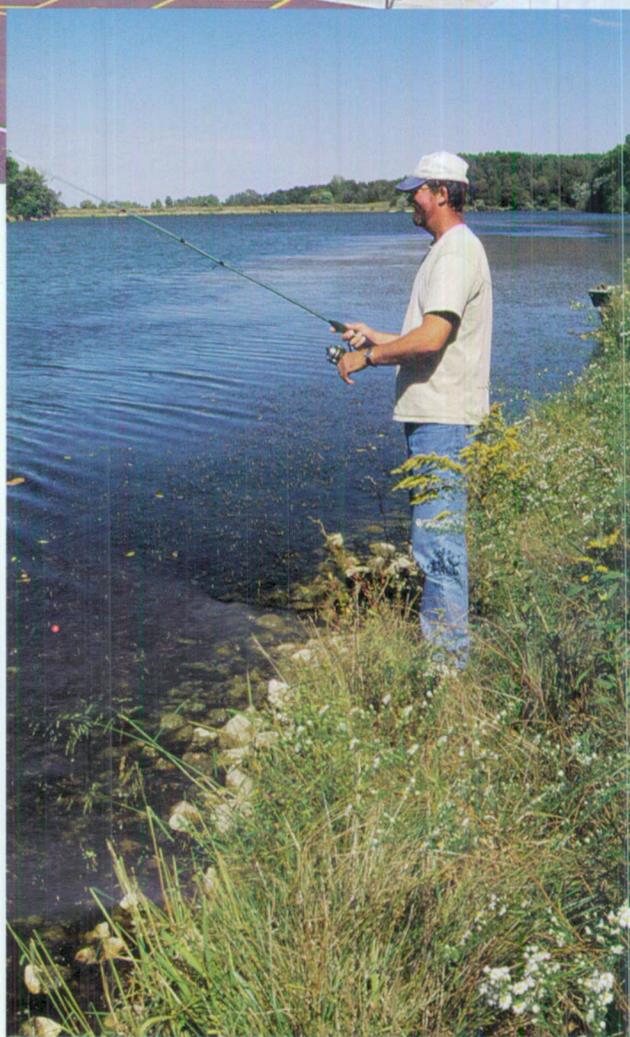




Community parks like Rotary Park in Decatur offer important recreation opportunities.

resources also improve community well-being because green space adds quality to neighborhood landscapes.

The Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan will guide the conservation and development of Illinois' outdoor recreation resources for the next five years. The ultimate goal is to provide parks and open space systems that are resource-compatible and serve the needs of all citizens.



Fishing is popular in all seasons.





## chapter 2

# Benefits of Open Space and Recreation

**P**arks and other open spaces provide numerous benefits to communities and to the state, including enhanced quality of life, improved public health and tourism opportunities. They balance other community land uses and help shape growth. The benefits of open space make it a critical public investment.

### Quality of Life

People want to live where there is open space that provides scenic views and community character, habitat for wildlife, and recreational opportunities. A recent IDNR survey, *Public Attitudes Toward Open Space Initiatives in Illinois*, finds that access to open space is one of the keys to a satisfactory quality of life (57 percent

believe open space is important to their quality of life). Property values are typically higher for property near parks and other open spaces.<sup>1</sup> (see Appendix for Notes) A 1997 survey of owners of small companies ranked recreation/parks/open space as the highest priority in choosing a new location for their business. With an economy based more on services and less on traditional industry, businesses are free to shop for an appealing location, preferring communities with a high quality of life, including an abundance of open space and nearby recreation. Consequently, open space plays a key role in a region's economic future because a region with natural character attracts a skilled labor force.

In the past, Illinois has not been in a strong position

to use open space as a way to attract economic development relative to other states. One study ranks Illinois 48<sup>th</sup> in open space per capita,<sup>2</sup> another study has Illinois 39<sup>th</sup> in people per managed acres of conservation land.<sup>3</sup> However, some areas of Illinois (suburban Chicago area) have recently shown signs of strong support for funding the purchase and protection of open space. In the last four years, 19 ballot initiatives have been passed to provide \$510 million in local funding for open space.

## Public Health

Open space that is used for recreational activities can also deliver health benefits. In the U.S., 14 percent of Gross Domestic Product goes toward health care expenditures, more than any other country. A sedentary lifestyle is the most significant risk factor for coronary disease, the number one cause of death in the nation, and is also a risk factor for diabetes and cancer. One study found that the U.S. could save \$20 billion a year in health care costs if every sedentary American walked an hour a day. Access to parks and outdoor recreation can lead to a healthier lifestyle, in effect acting as a preventative care strategy (along with a moderate diet) for lessening health care problems and their costs.

There is no doubt America is at a public health crossroads. Physical activity rates in the United States are reported as dangerously low. The 2001 U.S. Surgeon General's report, *A Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity*, recommends that Americans engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity five days a week. The report says that two-thirds of Americans fail to meet that recommendation and that 60 percent engage in no physical activity at all during leisure time. Research has shown that more than 50 percent of the adult population is overweight and that one in four is obese. Youths (18 and younger) today are also less active than previous generations with the result that one in four is overweight.

Although it is an individual choice whether to be active or sedentary, the way communities develop their environment for physical activity can encourage or impede that choice. Lack of access to convenient recreation opportunities is commonly cited as a major barrier to regular physical activity. Providing recreation facilities that are easily accessible and close-to-home

makes it convenient for people to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives.

Trails and paths, especially, offer people opportunities to walk, bike, rollerblade, etc., during leisure time. Trails and paths also offer a non-motorized means for connecting people with local destinations such as schools, transit centers, businesses, and neighborhoods. These multi-purpose facilities make it easier for people to engage in physical activity while carrying out their daily routines, e.g., commuting to work or school, running errands, visiting neighbors, or enjoying recreational time.

IDNR is a member of the Illinois Cardiovascular Health Partnership, a broad-based coalition of state agencies, hospitals, health specialists, nurses, pharmacists, health educators, and many other interested parties. The partnership is developing a state plan for cardiovascular health promotion, and disease prevention and control. IDNR participates on the nutrition and physical activity committee and is committed to the Partnership 2007 goal of improving physical fitness with daily exercise, particularly walking and bicycling. Specific strategies, interventions, and programs have been adopted by the group to achieve its goal of improved physical well-being for Illinoisans.

## Conservation Education

Because parks and other open spaces preserve and protect natural resources, they provide Illinoisans the opportunity to experience the outdoors and understand how nature contributes to their quality of life. They provide a connection to Illinois' natural heritage.

Many recreation agencies also offer educational facilities such as nature centers and marked trails and programs such as talks and guided walks that help people interpret nature and relate it to their lives. This conservation education fosters appreciation of and caring for the natural environment, often times instilling a stewardship ethic that lasts a lifetime.

## Environmental Benefits

Open space and recreation can have environmental benefits. For example, greenways along rivers and streams not only provide open space and corridors for trails, they also serve as temporary flood storage, filter non-point pollution, and provide wildlife habitat.

Community parks not only offer outdoor recreation, but can also reduce noise and air pollution.

These environmental benefits can have significant value. Open space can reduce the need for urban infrastructure such as stormwater management and water treatment facilities. For example, two studies of the Chicago region estimated the value of floodplain storage at \$52,340 per acre (in 2000 dollars) based on the average cost of engineered floodwater storage. Other estimated benefits include \$3,177/acre for wastewater reclamation and reuse, \$1,775/acre for pollution abatement, and \$504/acre for aquifer recharge. Consequently, these “green infrastructure” benefits need to be documented and considered so that more efficient and sustainable development patterns are chosen.

### Economic Impacts

Other economic benefits are derived from trip and equipment expenditures. According to the 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, while participation is down somewhat, these activities still make a significant contribution to the state’s economy: more than \$4 billion dollars in economic output, 42,000 jobs, and \$315 million in state and local taxes.

IDNR owns or leases several hundred outdoor recreation sites throughout the state. These sites include

state parks, conservation areas, nature preserves, natural areas, fish and wildlife areas, greenways and trails, state forests, and more. The average annual attendance over the last five years at these sites was estimated to be over 42 million. This translates to about \$500 million a year spent on trips to state parks and other recreational sites, leading to \$790 million in economic output, 8,500 jobs, and \$240.5 million in earnings.

### All Benefits

Parks and recreation offer a combination of diverse benefits, which all add up to many positives for the people who use them. Long viewed as places for nature relaxation and spiritual renewal, parks have evolved also into community centers for recreational activity.

In the 21st century, still another major benefit is now gaining widespread realization: parks and open space are important elements of community design. Trails and greenways, especially, connect places within communities and also serve as transportation corridors. While parks that are close to where people live have long been a goal of recreation agencies, the importance of convenient places for recreation has gained renewed momentum. Easy access to parks and open space is now viewed as contributing to Americans’ lifestyle and health.

So in the words of the popular slogan of Illinois’ park districts for many years, “the benefits are endless.”

Table 1

## Economic Impact of Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife-Watching<sup>4</sup>

Dollars are in millions

	HUNTING	FISHING	WILDLIFE-WATCHING
<b>Retail Sales<sup>5</sup></b>	\$451.4	\$736.6	\$753
<b>Economic Output</b>	\$949.4	\$1,620.0	\$1,690.0
<b>Earnings</b>	\$243.4	\$398.3	\$501.5
<b>Taxes</b>	\$72.2	\$132.9	\$110.4
<b>Jobs</b>	\$8,438	\$12,886	\$20,716
<b>Activity Days</b>	\$4,521,757	\$16,133,000	\$9,416,000 <sup>6</sup>





### *chapter 3*

# *Public Attitudes Towards Open Space*

National polls have shown that parks, greenways, and trails are desirable community features; people want to live where there is open space that provides scenic views and community character, habitat for wildlife, and recreational opportunities. Two recent independent surveys conducted for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources<sup>7</sup> and the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD)<sup>8</sup> help us understand the demand and need for, and attitudes toward, open space and outdoor recreation in Illinois.

Overall, the two studies found that most respondents believe open space is an important issue to the state and that it is important to their quality of life. In the IDNR survey, 57 percent of Illinois residents believe it is

important to their quality of life while only 14 percent believe it is not important.

When compared to other community issues, “open space” issues rank relatively high in importance in the IDNR study (Figure 1). “Protecting water quality” was described as extremely or very important by the largest percentage of respondents (90 percent) and, when asked which issue listed was the most important for their community to address, the largest number of respondents chose “managing growth/new development.” “Protecting air quality” came in third and “protecting natural areas” was sixth.

The IAPD study had slightly different results to similar questions. When asked which issue was the most

important in making a community a desirable place to live, respondents chose “quality of schools” as most important. Ranked fifth through eighth were recreation program/facilities, amount of open space, number of parks, and rate of development.

The IDNR survey also asked respondents to rate the importance of various types of open space (Figure 2). In general, undeveloped open space (natural areas, wildlife habitat, stream corridors, and state parks) is considered as important as developed open space (community and neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and trails). Seven types of open space were described by six out of ten respondents as being extremely or very important. Five of these were undeveloped spaces.

Neighborhood playgrounds like the one below, City of Bloomington’s Clearwater Park, are funded through the Department’s OSLAD program.

## Support for Statewide Open Space Fund

### IDNR Survey

When asked if they support or oppose the state of Illinois establishing a fund to pay for the acquisition of additional open space, over twice as many support than oppose—45 percent to 19 percent.

Greatest support is in IDNR Region 3 (east-central Illinois) and least support in IDNR Region 5 (southeastern Illinois).

A majority of people are willing to pay \$2, \$10, and \$20 annually, 50 percent were willing to pay \$35, and 35 percent were willing to pay \$50.

### IAPD Survey

Seventy-one percent of respondents supported a 1/10th of one percent increase in state sales tax (average of \$14 per year per household) and 59 percent supported a 2/10th of one percent increase (average of \$28 per year per household).



Figure 1

### Importance of Community Issues (IDNR Open Space Survey)

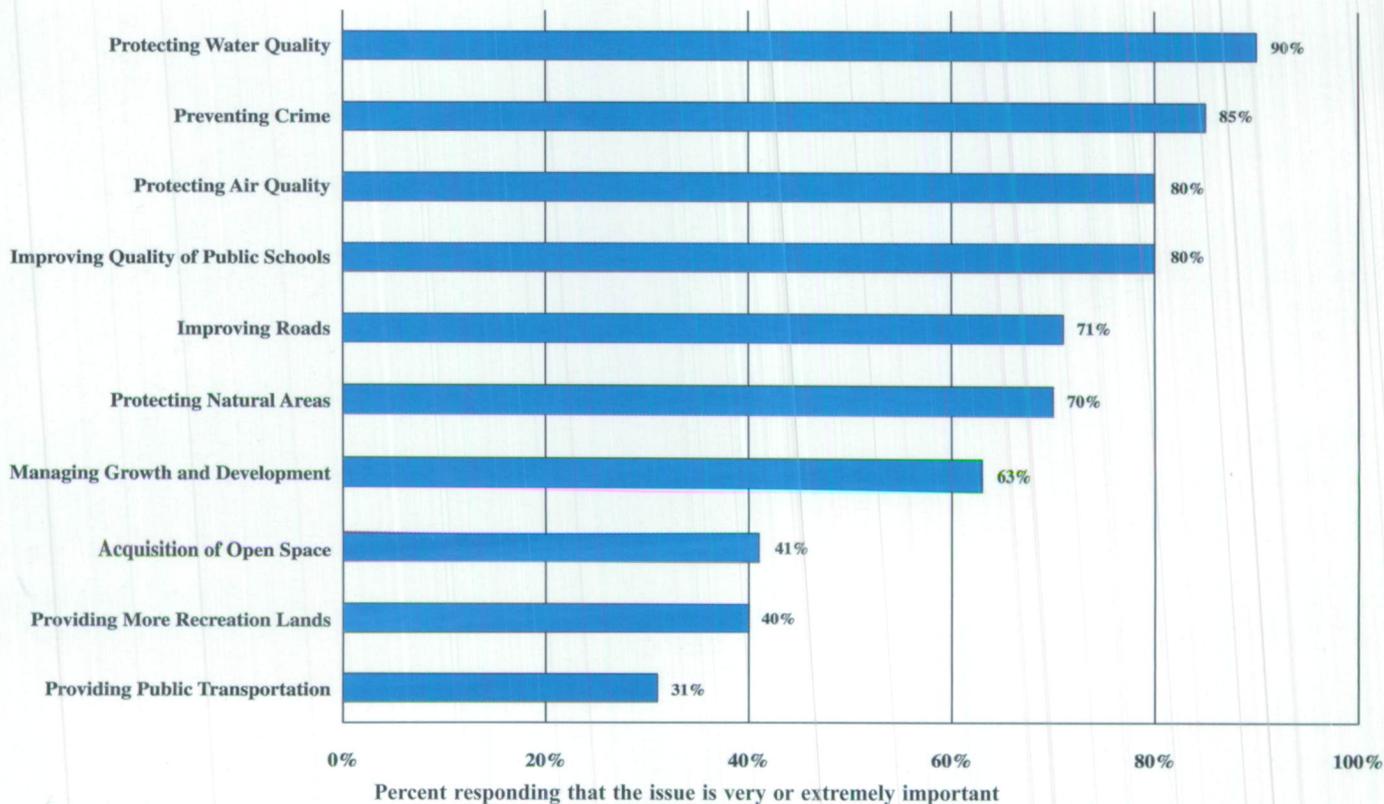
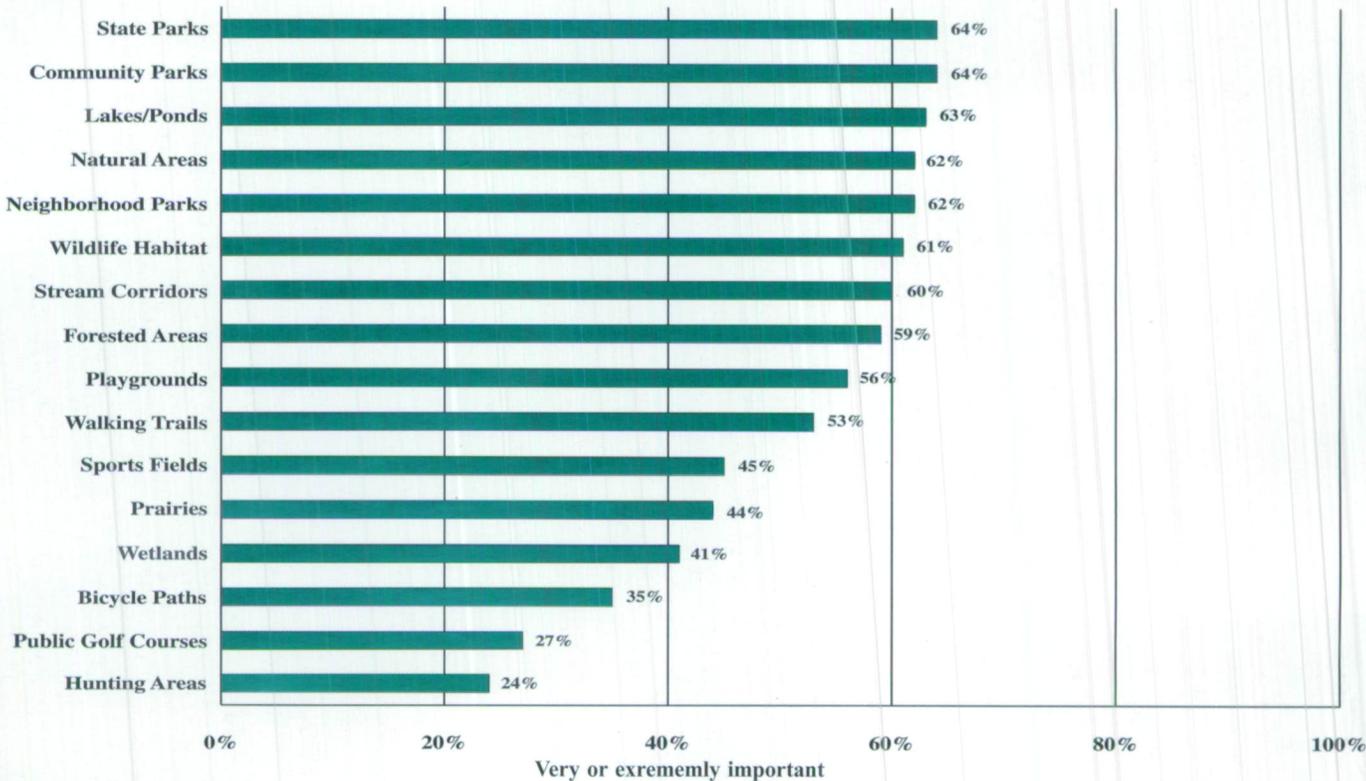


Figure 2

### Importance of Specific Types of Open Space (IDNR Open Space Survey)







*chapter 4*  
**Illinois' Natural Resources**

**T**he extent, condition, and diversity of Illinois' natural resources have a major impact on the setting for outdoor recreation in the state.

Natural settings such as forests, lakes, wetlands, rivers, streams, and grasslands are the key to quality outdoor recreation. Fishing and boating depend on clean water; hunting is dependent upon good habitat; and nature walking, camping, and picnicking depend upon the scenic value of the landscape.

Even though the Illinois landscape (Figure 3, next page) is dominated by agriculture, it still has a surprising diversity of natural resources. Places that resemble Illinois' pre-settlement natural conditions, however, are few in number and small in area. Table 2 identifies the categories and acreage of the highest

quality natural communities from the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory.

Table 2

**High Quality Natural Communities**

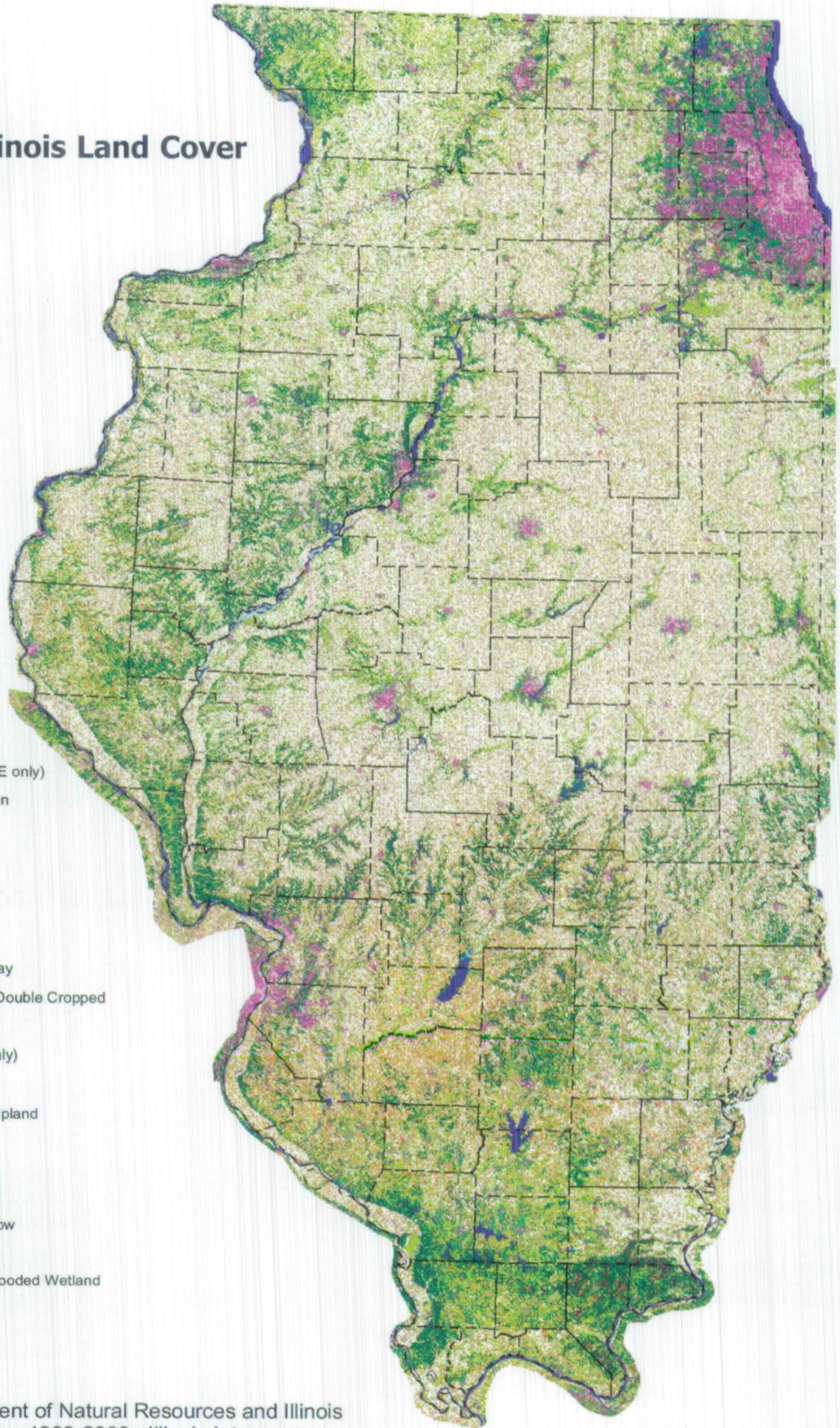
	<u>Acreage</u>
Forest	13,979
Prairie	3,628
Savanna	1,452
Wetlands	7,068
Lakes & Ponds	2,164
Primary (Cliffs, Caves, Bedrock)	863

Figure 3

### Illinois Land Cover

**Legend**

- High Density Urban
- Medium Density Urban (NE only)
- Low/Medium Density Urban
- Urban Grassland
- Open Water
- Corn
- Soybeans
- Winter Wheat
- Other Small Grains and Hay
- Winter Wheat/Soybeans, Double Cropped
- Other Agriculture
- Low Density Urban (NE only)
- Rural Grassland
- Partial Forest/Savannah Upland
- Upland Forest
- Floodplain Forest
- Barren and Exposed Land
- Shallow Marsh/Wet Meadow
- Deep Marsh
- Seasonally/Temporarily Flooded Wetland
- Coniferous Forest
- Shallow Water Wetland
- Swamp



Source: Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois Department of Agriculture. 1999-2000. Illinois Interagency Landscape Classification Project. Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Springfield, Illinois.

The state’s land and water resources continue to face development pressure—primarily from urban sprawl—at a time when the need for outdoor recreation opportunities is already far greater than available resources. Illinois, like the rest of the nation, faces the challenge of conserving and protecting the natural resources that contribute greatly to the state’s quality of life.

To help focus the state’s efforts in protecting natural resources, IDNR’s Critical Trends Assessment Program (CTAP) developed an inventory of “resource rich” areas. Using land cover data and geo-referenced biological data—quantity of forests, wetlands, Illinois Natural Areas Inventory sites, and Biologically Significant Streams—CTAP determined where the most

along riparian corridors, and include 45 percent of the bottomland forest, 34 percent of the upland forest, and 43 percent of the non-forested wetland. These areas are viewed as prime candidates for public-private partnerships that merge natural resource stewardship with compatible economic and recreational development. The smallest RRAs are Sugar River, Thorn Creek, Des Plaines River, Illinois Beach, and the Du Page River, all in the northern part of the state. The largest RRAs are Big Rivers, the Southern Till Plain, and the Middle Illinois River.

### The Setting

The state is generally perceived as flat farmland. In reality, it has gently rolling terrain with prominent relief features left behind by four major periods of glaciation (Figure 5, below). Rugged terrain is restricted to areas that escaped glaciation in northwestern Illinois and the extreme south, to glacial landforms such as moraines, and to the streams that have worn valleys in the surface since the close of the glacial period. Topography in the state is also shaped by the great rivers that border Illinois—the Mississippi, Ohio, and Wabash—and a

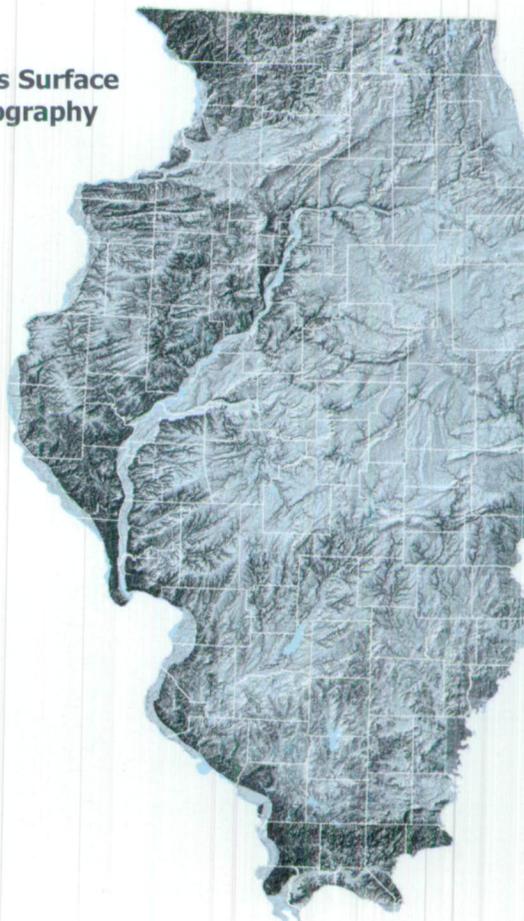


Figure 4

### Resource Rich Areas

Figure 5

### Illinois Surface Topography



biologically rich areas of the state are located.<sup>9</sup> The 30 Resource Rich Areas (RRA) that were identified (Figure 4, above) cover almost one-fifth of the state, about seven million acres, and range in size from 15,144 to 626,795 acres.

They are distributed throughout the state, generally

great lake, Lake Michigan. The Illinois River winds in a scenic corridor through the middle of the state.

**Streams and Rivers** By any measure, Illinois is a water-rich state, and most of those riches flow through its streams and rivers. Illinois' 10 river basins are drained by more than 26,000 miles of flowing waters. This system of streams, rivers, and creeks supplies Illinoisans with a multitude of recreational uses including hunting, fishing, boating and swimming. More than 1.9 million acres of lakes, rivers, and perennial streams provide habitat for the state's nearly 200 species of fish. Although bass, bluegill, and catfish are among the most popular game fish, Illinois has a rich diversity of native species that include colorful darters and the unique ancient fishes—sturgeon, paddlefish, and gars. Illinois waterways also serve as hosts to thousands of waterfowl as well as winter home to the federally-threatened American Bald Eagle. Waterfowl hunting and water dependent bird-watching are also popular water-based recreational activities.

**Woodlands** Because it sits at the junction of several continental climate regions, Illinois has a rich diversity of wooded lands. In all, Illinois counts 14 subcategories of upland and floodplain forest plus the less common sand and flatwoods forests. Illinois forests include eight major species associations that encompass more than 30 forest types in all. In total Illinois has nearly five million acres of forest, mostly upland deciduous. Forested areas are extensive throughout southern

Illinois' forests contribute to our economy and provide the ecological systems and visual landscapes essential to our quality of life.



and western Illinois, but in the rest of the state they are usually found along river valleys and as isolated forest remnants.

Illinois' forests are the state's unofficial wildlife refuge system. As islands amid the ocean of grain, forests, according to one index, comprise more than 75 percent of Illinois' wildlife habitat. Four of five Illinois mammals and amphibians and three of five birds need forested land for at least part of their lifecycle. In all, the woods are home to more than 420 birds and other vertebrates. Many commercially important furbearers dwell mainly or exclusively in forests including the red and gray foxes, coyotes, and raccoons. Squirrels and white-tailed deer are the most conspicuous among mammals in Illinois woods. This important habitat serves as a setting for a variety of recreational uses including hunting, trapping, hiking and nature walks, picnicking, camping, off-road bicycling, and horseback riding.

**Wetlands** Both wetland and natural grassland areas are important elements of the state's outdoor setting. Wetlands are a multiple-value resource that provide flood and erosion control, enhance water quality, provide diverse wildlife habitat, and offer recreational and educational opportunities.

Illinois land was once as famous for its wetness as for its richness. It is conservatively estimated that at the time of European settlement more than eight million acres in Illinois (roughly one acre in five of its total area) were wetlands of one kind or another. Other estimates suggest that this figure is low. Today, based on classified satellite information, only 1.4 million acres of wetlands survive statewide, representing 3.9 percent of the state's total



In the past wetlands have been drained and lost to agricultural and urban land uses, but restoration is now a priority.

land area. This figure, based on 1999/2000 satellite imagery, compares favorably with the 1.2 million acres of wetland estimated by the Illinois Wetlands Inventory, conducted in the 1980s. The Inventory found that some 918,000 acres of “natural” wetlands (that is, not diked, impounded, or excavated) remained statewide, less than a tenth of their original extent. These are concentrated in the northeast—along major rivers such as the Fox, Illinois, Des Plaines, and Kankakee—and in southern Illinois.

Of the surviving natural wetlands, only about 6,000 acres are high in ecological quality and undisturbed. On the other hand, about 330,000 acres of Illinois wetlands are modified or were created by dikes, impoundments, or excavations.

One of the ways the state is trying to stop the loss of wetlands is through the Interagency Wetland Policy Act, which is administered by IDNR. The Act is intended to insure that there is no overall net loss of the state’s existing wetland acres or their functional values resulting from state-supported activities. In addition, wetlands conservation and restoration is one of the priorities of the Conservation 2000 grants program (see sidebar). As of FY 2003, more than 80 projects involving at least 50,000 acres were wetlands-related. Most of the projects involved restoring wetland acreage. One project, for example, restored a 16-acre floodplain

## CONSERVATION 2000

In the mid-1990s, it was widely recognized that Illinois’ ecosystems were declining and that better stewardship was needed. Because more than 90% of the land in Illinois is privately owned, policy makers determined that a voluntary, incentive-based, grassroots approach would be the most appropriate. Since that time, several thousand acres of habitat have been restored through the resulting public-private partnerships formed under Conservation 2000, the program legislated to promote ecosystem-based management of privately owned land.

These Ecosystem Partnerships—coalitions of local stakeholders such as private land-owners, businesses, scientists, environmental organizations, recreational enthusiasts, and policy makers—are the heart of the Ecosystems Program, a Conservation 2000 component administered by IDNR. The local partnership members are united by a common interest in the natural resources of their watershed community. So far there are 39 partnerships covering 82 percent of Illinois and serving 98 percent of Illinois residents. The state Ecosystems Program supports their efforts with financial and technical assistance, including grants for habitat restoration, land acquisition, planning, education, and research on private lands across the state. Since 1996, C2000 has provided more than \$23 million, with an additional \$32 million in matching funds, for nearly 580 projects sponsored by local partnerships. This funding has restored 50,580 acres of habitat, including prairie, forest, wetland, and wildlife habitat, and protected nearly 5,000 acres of habitat through land acquisition and conservation easements.



field to emergent wetland habitat, while several projects in the Cache watershed restored wetland functions to several hundred acres.

**Prairie** What was not forest or water in presettlement Illinois was prairie. The exact extent of these grassland communities is disputed, but it is safe to say that in 1820 at least 60 percent of Illinois' land area was grassland of one type or another. Like wetlands, natural grassland areas have nearly been eliminated. The Illinois Natural Areas Inventory finds that only a fraction (3,628 acres) of high quality original prairie survives. Most sites of relict prairie occur on hilly land along the northern and western edges of the state (areas of more prominent topographic relief) and other places where the plow and bulldozer can't reach, such as wetlands, cemeteries, and railroad rights-of-way. The vast majority of grassland areas in Illinois, however, are modified landscapes such as pastures, waterways, rights-of-way, and rural roadsides.

Based on 1999/2000 satellite imagery, there are nearly 4.1 million acres of rural grassland (including native prairies), constituting slightly more than 11 percent of the state's total land area. The overwhelming majority of these areas have been plowed, heavily grazed, or frequently mowed and often are dominated by planted introduced grasses that do not resemble native prairies. Nonetheless, they may serve as a refuge for some native plant species and provide habitat for

grassland-inhabiting animal species whose presence is determined by the extent and structure of the grassland rather than by the plant species in it. While recreational uses of the natural grassland areas must be restricted to nature observation and education to preserve their undisturbed state, other modified grassland areas (both public and private) can accommodate a variety of uses such as hunting, horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking, and field trialing.

## Future Natural Resources Needs

The fact that Illinois has lost so much of its pre-settlement environment makes it even more imperative that the state step up its efforts to maintain the natural areas that remain, enhance those that are not high quality, and restore those that are not yet developed but are degraded. This will not only improve biodiversity in the landscape, but also ensure a diverse environment for outdoor recreation.



Trails offer bicycling, hiking and other recreation and are a place to enjoy nature.



*chapter 5*

# *Illinois' Demographic Trends*

**T**he demand for outdoor recreation is influenced, in part, by demographics and the distribution of the population. While Illinois has a rural heritage as a leading agricultural state, it is also an urban state—home to the third largest city and metropolitan area in the U.S. as well as diverse mid-size cities that reflect different regional influences. Nearly 86 percent of Illinois' population lives within the state's 10 metropolitan areas, defined by the U.S. Census, that comprise approximately 30 percent of the state's land area. This concentration of people on the landscape, as well as the changing nature of the population, has implications for

outdoor recreation demand now and in the future.

Illinois could be called the comeback state of the Midwest. After stagnant population change between 1980 and 1990, the state gained almost one million new residents during the decade of the 1990s, with most of the growth occurring in Chicago and its suburbs. Total population in Illinois in 2000 was 12,419,293. This represents a positive change of 8.6 percent from the 1990 population count. That increase remains behind the nation's growth of 13.2 percent, but is comparable to the growth experienced in other Midwestern states during the decade.

Table 3

**TEN LARGEST CITIES**

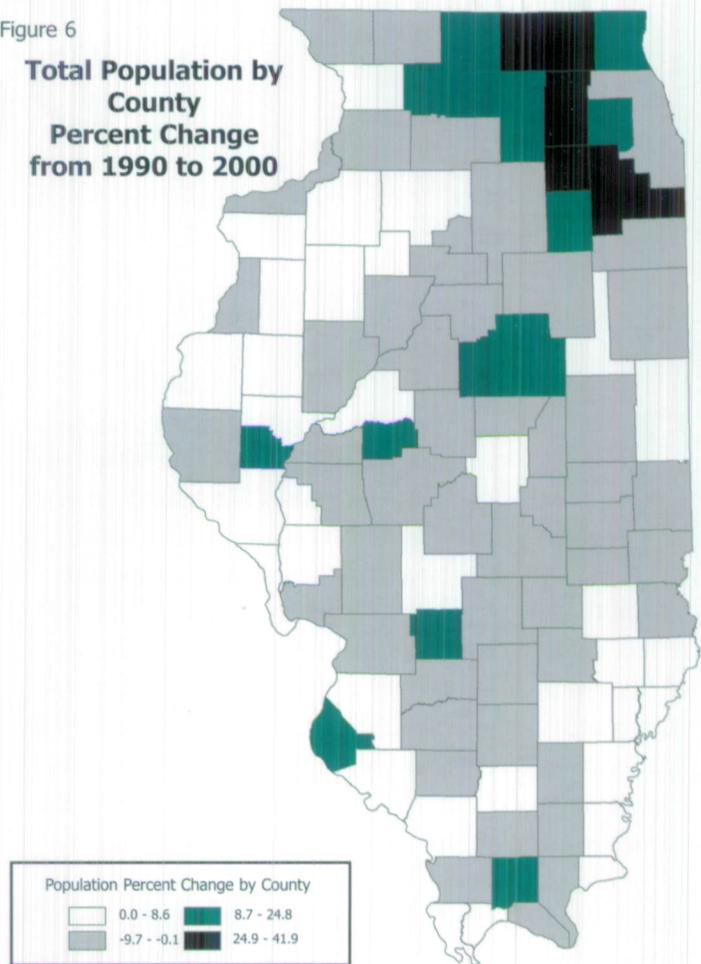
	<u>1990 population</u>	<u>2000 population</u>	<u>Percent change</u>
<b>Chicago</b>	2,783,726	2,896,016	4.0
<b>Rockford</b>	139,426	150,115	7.7
<b>Aurora</b>	99,581	142,990	43.6
<b>Naperville</b>	85,351	128,358	50.4
<b>Peoria</b>	113,504	112,932	-0.5
<b>Springfield</b>	105,227	111,454	5.9
<b>Joliet</b>	76,836	106,221	38.2
<b>Elgin</b>	77,010	94,487	22.7
<b>Waukegan</b>	69,392	87,901	26.7
<b>Cicero</b>	67,436	85,616	27.0

Chicago grew by more than 112,000 people to 2,896,016—a four percent increase. (A 1999 Census Bureau report estimated the city’s population would grow by only 15,000 people.) While Chicago and Rockford kept their status as the state’s biggest cities, Aurora and Naperville overtook the older more established cities of Peoria and the state capital of Springfield for third and fourth positions. Aurora grew by nearly 44 percent to 142,990 while Naperville grew by slightly more than 50 percent to 128,358. Of the ten largest cities in Illinois, six—all in northeastern Illinois—recorded double-digit population increases (Table 3).

Not surprisingly, the five counties that border Cook County each posted double digit increases (Figure 6). McHenry and Will Counties each grew by more than 40 percent to 260,077 and 502,266 respectively. Lake County’s population grew by nearly 25 percent, Kane County by slightly more than 27 percent, and Du Page County by almost 16 percent. Of the 17 counties that recorded double-digit population increases between 1990 and 2000, 11 were in the northern third of the state. Conversely, a third of Illinois counties (34) showed a population loss of up to 10 percent. These counties are located in a north/south oriented crescent

Figure 6

**Total Population by County  
Percent Change  
from 1990 to 2000**



centered on western Illinois and in a north/south tier of counties in southeastern Illinois.

This pattern of faster growth in Chicago and its suburbs and slower or negative growth in southern Illinois has resulted in a steady shift in the weighted mean center of the state's population towards northeastern Illinois (Figure 8). In 2000, the mean population center was located in Grundy County west of Coal City. In 1990 the population center was located south and slightly west of the 2000 weighted mean population center.

An examination of population density (people per square mile) provides further insight into why the mean center of population has shifted (Figure 7). Density is higher and more concentrated (multiple counties with higher density) in the Chicago metropolitan area as compared with other parts of the state. This "weights" the population center heavily towards the northeast.

Figure 7

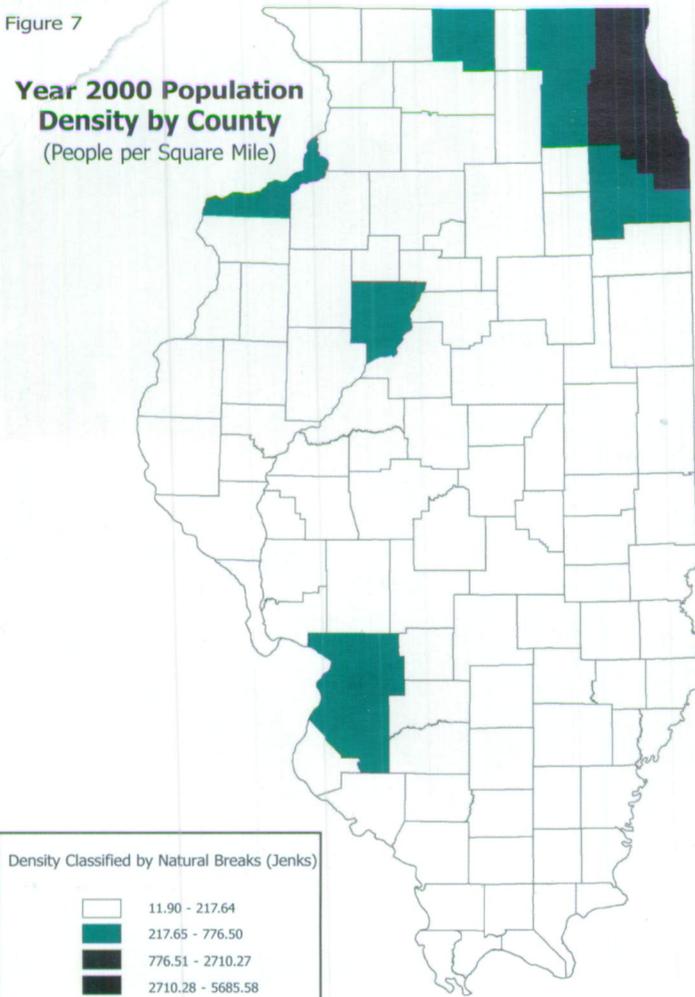


Figure 8



This shift points out one of the challenges of providing adequate recreational opportunities in Illinois, i.e., the uneven nature of population growth and density of the landscape and its effect on the demand for and supply of recreation.

Besides population growth rates and density, age demographics also influence outdoor recreation demand. The 2000 Census shows that the percentage of the population under 18 years of age is highest in the collar counties in northeastern Illinois. (Figure 9). This is not surprising given the significant rate of population growth in this geographic area. The pattern suggests that younger families are fueling the double-digit growth rates in this portion of the state.

Figure 9

Percentage Who Are 17 or Younger



Natural Breaks Classification (Jenks) percentage

- 17.70 - 21.00
- 21.01 - 24.20
- 24.21 - 27.20
- 27.21 - 30.30

### Future Demographic Trends

The rapid and concentrated rate of population growth will likely accelerate demand for new recreational opportunities in northeastern Illinois. Paradoxically, this is also where open space will be under the most pressure from development and where competition for land will drive real estate prices higher. (See following chapter.) In other locations around the state, where population growth and population density are lower, adequate land is available for outdoor recreation but often these opportunities are not proximate to demand. Stated another way, there is uneven or lumpy supply in relation to demand. Finally, age distribution can also play a role in shaping outdoor recreation demand. The pattern of a younger population in the suburbs around Chicago and an older age profile in more rural areas of the state suggests that different types of outdoor recreation are likely to be demanded at different geographic locations.

Communities like the Village of South Holland are providing more facilities for rollerblading and skateboarding.



A faint, artistic illustration of butterflies and flowers is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the page. It features several butterflies with detailed wing patterns, some perched on stems with small flowers. The illustration is rendered in a light, monochromatic style that blends with the background.  
*chapter 6*

# *The Impact of Urban Growth On Natural Resources and Open Space*

**U**rban growth in Illinois and across the U.S. has long been characterized by widespread conversion of land to urban use at a pace that exceeds population growth. In Illinois, the ratio of urban land growth to population growth ranges between 3:1 in the Quad Cities to almost 15:1 in Decatur. In the Chicago region, the largest metropolitan area in Illinois, urban land increased 66 percent between 1960-1990 while population grew only 14 percent (almost a 5:1 ratio).

This rapid low-density urbanization of the landscape can have a substantial impact on the natural resources that remain in the state. For example, while the Peoria metropolitan area population grew less than one percent between 1970 and 2000, more than 10,500 acres of

forest and 14,000 acres of farm land have been converted to urban use. This conversion has several implications for communities' quality of life in terms of outdoor recreation, green infrastructure, and overall community character. Recreational opportunities such as parks and bike paths are important to the health of local citizens and for making a community a desirable place to live. Natural resources also provide value as green infrastructure—natural ecosystem functions that provide benefits to human populations, often reducing the need for and cost of built infrastructure. These include services such as flood control, water quality protection, and reduced energy use and air pollution. Natural amenities are also important to community character and contribute to the overall economic health

of a community; surveys show that open space is a key factor for business location decisions. Consequently, protecting natural resources is a pivotal “sustainable growth” strategy to enhance community quality of life.

Openlands Project, a non-profit organization devoted to preserving and protecting open space in the Chicago region, developed an overall picture of likely future development patterns in the 14-county Chicago metropolitan region.<sup>10</sup> It mapped future urbanization to illustrate lands at high risk (likely within 10 years) and medium risk (likely within 30 years) of development. The map was based on existing information (land use maps, comprehensive plans, other information from regional planning agencies) and the input of local experts (policy makers, planners, builders, developers, open space advocates) during a series of meetings in each of the region’s

**Urban development is expected to expand more than 2.5 times its current level in the next 10 years, and 3.6 times in the next 30 years.**

counties. They found that urban development could expand 60 percent in the next 10 years and will more than double (1.2 million acres) in the next 30 years. More than 300 unprotected designated natural areas and

critical species habitats are at risk of being lost to this development.

Using the Openlands Project report, IDNR examined the potential impacts of urban development on natural resources in McHenry County (northwest of Chicago), one of the fastest growing counties in the state that also has an extensive amount of natural resources, particularly wetlands. Urban development is expected to expand more than 2.5 times its current level in the next 10 years, and 3.6 times in the next

30 years. As Figure 10 illustrates, there could be a significant loss of natural resources from this development.

Table 4

**POTENTIAL LAND USE CHANGE IN MCHENRY COUNTY**

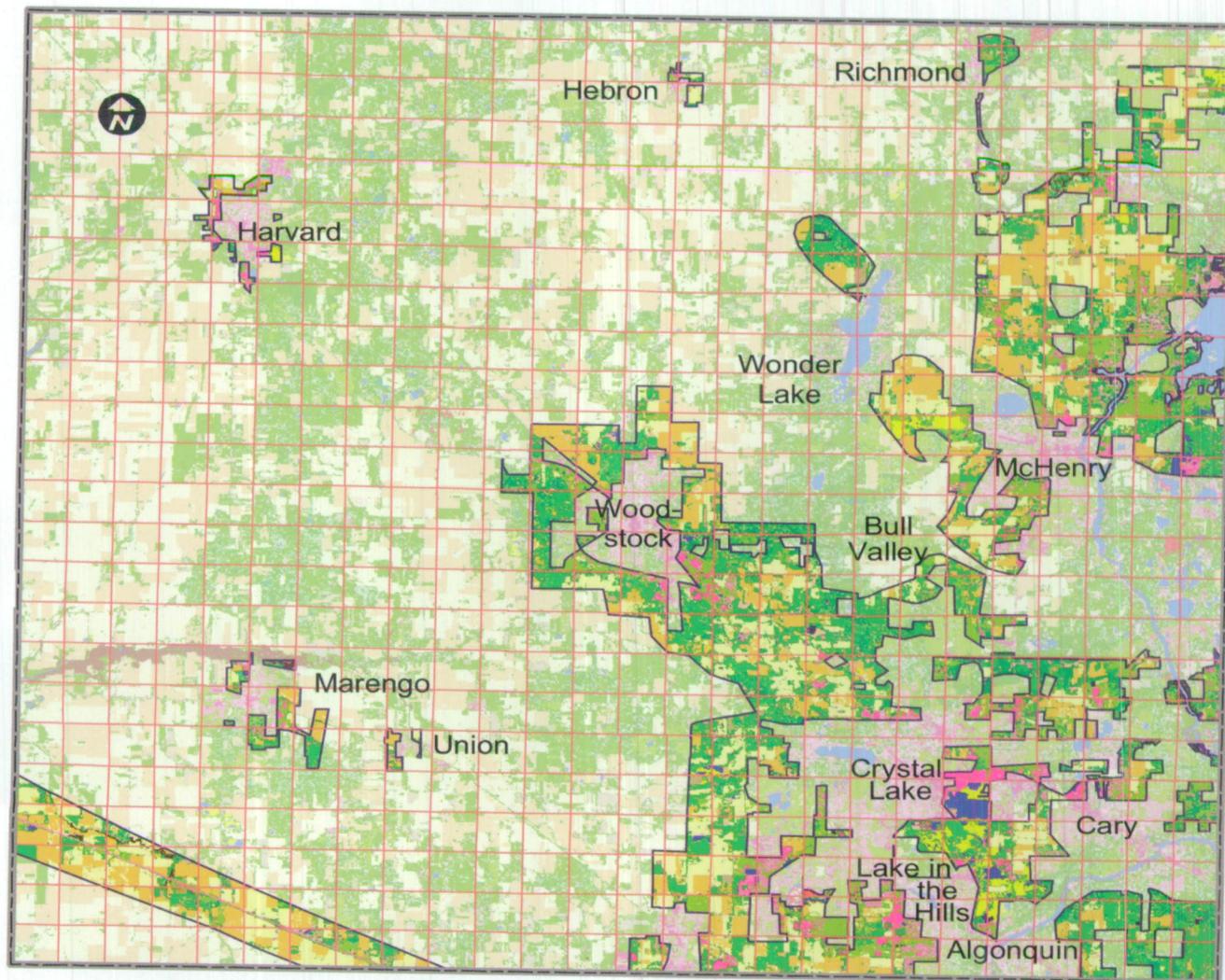
<b><i>Acres of Development</i></b>	<b><i>Acres</i></b>	<b><i>Increase</i></b>
Current Built-Up Area	53,534	
High Risk of Development (next 10 years)	79,856	249 percent
Moderate Risk of Development (next 30 years)	60,525	362 percent
<b><i>Current Land Use at High Risk</i></b>		
Forest	10,406	
Wetlands	1,453	
Rural Grassland	19,046	
Urban Grassland	9,376	
Agriculture land	30,438	

In the next 10 years alone urbanization will change the character of the region. McHenry County could lose more than 10,000 acres of forest, 1,400 acres of wetlands, and 28,000 acres of urban and rural grasslands (some of which are parks and greenways) as well as a number of natural areas. Threatened natural resources include the high-quality Nippersink Creek sub-

watershed and rare fen communities along the Fox River. The Chain O' Lakes-Fox River watershed, which encompasses parts of McHenry, Lake, Cook, and Kane Counties, has the highest concentration of natural areas in all of Illinois (more than 30 are in McHenry County). If not protected in some manner, these natural resources could be lost forever to urbanization.

Figure 10

### Land Cover Types in McHenry County Affected by Projected Urban Growth



**Key:**

High Density Urban	Other Small Grains and Hay	Floodplain Forest
Medium Density Urban	Other Agriculture	Open Water
Low Density Urban (Chicago Area Only)	Rural Grassland	Shallow Water Wetland
Urban Grassland	Partial Forest/Savanna Upland	Shallow Marsh/Wet Meadow
Corn	Upland Forest	Deep Marsh
Soybeans	Coniferous Forest	Barren and Exposed Land
Winter Wheat	Section Lines	County Boundary

This map was produced by intersecting the 10-year growth projection from the Solar Mapping Project entitled "Under Pressure, Land Consumption in the Chicago Region 1998-2028" with the 1999-2000 Illinois Interagency Land Cover Classification Project. The latter is a product of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

## Future Growth

While the Chicago metropolitan area and McHenry County are the most obvious examples of the loss of open land to development, metropolitan areas throughout the state are undergoing similar trends. Growth of communities outward has been consuming land and

natural resources for many years, but new policies that encourage planning for sustainable communities could help. Conscious decisions to preserve natural values of the landscape must be made, so that not only will communities benefit but threatened open space resources will also be better protected.

Now part of the Lake County Forest Preserve District, this property's future development includes wetland, woodland and prairie restoration, a trail system, and fishing areas.





*chapter 7*

# Outdoor Recreation Supply

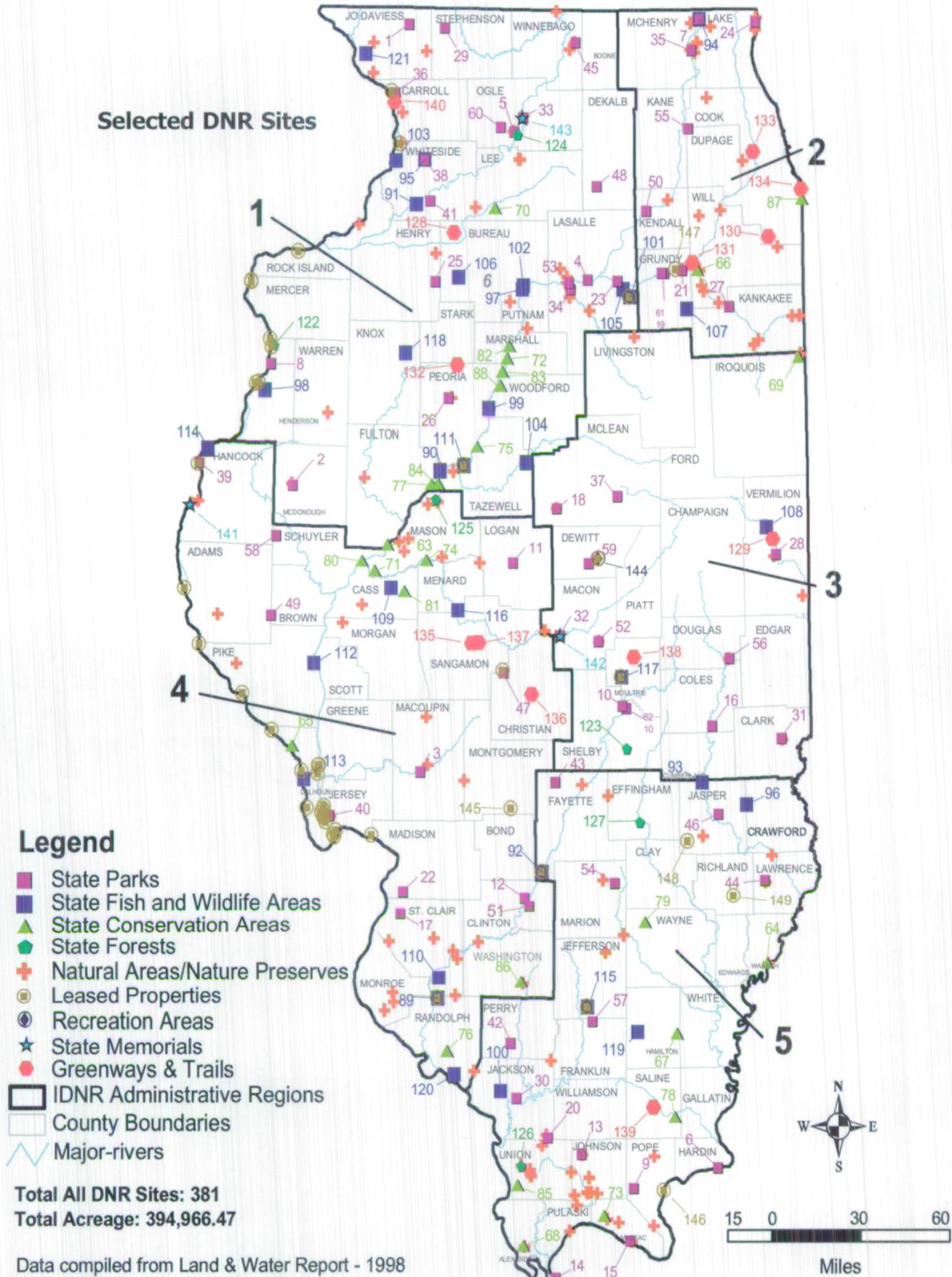
**T**he SCORP examines and characterizes Illinois' supply of public lands available for outdoor recreation. Of the state's total 36 million acres, 3.7% are in public ownership for natural resource protection and enjoyment. Compared with other states, Illinois' public recreation lands available

on a per person (Illinois resident) basis is relatively low, consistently ranking in the bottom ten percent of all states. Still, Illinois' supply of outdoor recreation resources is diverse, with natural assets providing the foundation for a statewide system of:

- Federal lands concentrated along major rivers, large reservoirs, and southern Shawnee hills,
- State parks, fish and wildlife areas, conservation areas, and trails,
- State historic sites and memorials,
- County forest preserves and conservation district areas,
- Park district lands and facilities,
- Municipal parks, and
- Private outdoor recreation areas.

Figure 11

**Selected DNR Sites**



Illinois is unlike any other state in the broad-based diversity of its local government outdoor recreation districts. There are more than 6,000 local park sites managed by more than 400 park, forest preserve, and conservation districts, municipal recreation agencies, and special outdoor recreation associations. Still, while Illinois' local park and recreation delivery system is excellent, many areas of the state remain where communities cannot adequately supply recreation lands to meet local needs. Partnership grant programs will continue to be a foundation for providing parks in communities across the state.

### Outdoor Recreation Land

Illinois devotes more than 1,340,000 acres to outdoor recreation. The lands can be categorized by the following management levels.

**Federal Lands** Federally-managed lands in Illinois are the largest public land areas, 479,065 total acres. These include the Shawnee National Forest and Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service; seven national wildlife refuges, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and three large reservoirs, managed by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. All are managed for resource conservation and resource-based recreation.

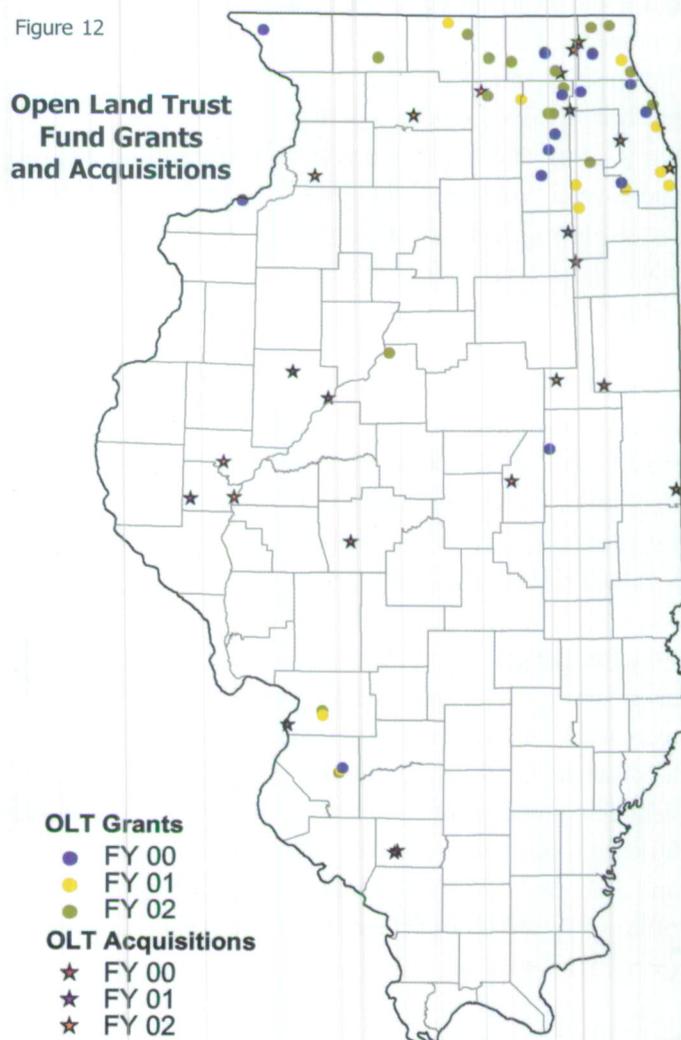
**State Lands** State-managed lands total 444,500 acres and include IDNR sites as well as historic sites managed by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Currently, state parks and natural resource areas managed by IDNR comprise one-third of the statewide system of outdoor recreation sites (Figure 11). Providing outdoor recreation that is compatible with the state's natural resources is one of the four core IDNR functions identified in the Department's 2003-2008 Strategic Plan.

The system began a century ago, in 1903, when Illinois purchased Ft. Massac (in Massac County) for public use. A few years later, in 1909, the Illinois General Assembly authorized the state to develop a system of parks. Land for the first such park, Starved Rock in LaSalle County, was acquired in 1911. Many of these early sites were acquired for their historic, natural, or scenic significance. As the demand for outdoor recreation increased over time, land with habitat or outdoor recreation value or land situated close to larger

cities was also acquired. Some of these sites, such as nature preserves, are managed to protect and preserve their natural values. Most sites, however, are open to resource-compatible outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, camping, boating, swimming, wildlife observation, nature study, hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. A number of sites have interpretive centers and education programs. Land acquisition for all these purposes continues today. The most recent IDNR land acquisition program, Open Land Trust, added 41,200 acres, through 2003, to lands held in the public trust (Figure 12, below).

**County Lands** County agencies—forest preserve districts, conservation districts, and various other county departments—manage 187,345 acres, mainly in northern and central Illinois. County-provided lands comprise a system of diverse forest preserves and conservation areas similar to state and federal lands; their main purpose is to provide stewardship for natural

Figure 12





## Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Land resources are the basic element of outdoor recreation, but recreational facilities enhance the enjoyment of those lands. Federal, state, and county-managed areas tend to be large in acreage with facilities that are based on the natural resources of the site, such as camping, boating, and nature viewing. Local parks are typically located within communities and the facilities are for active recreation, such as soccer and baseball, multi-use trails, and swimming pools.

Measuring the supply of Illinois' recreation facilities and estimating additional needs is challenging. Land resources are most scarce where the population is largest, and scenic rivers and hills are often hundreds of miles from metro areas. Illinois must balance its ability to offer recreation where natural resources are extensive with the need to provide recreation opportunities where more than 80% of the state's residents live, in metro areas.

An inventory of recreation facilities is the major tool in assessing recreational supply. In 1985 IDNR began using the Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory (IRFI) to measure statewide outdoor recreation supply. IRFI collected lands and facilities data directly from providers, resulting in a database of more than 7,000 sites. In

1993 the focus of IRFI shifted to county-level inventory and geographic mapping of sites and facilities (Figure 13, map of sites in Peoria County). Approximately half of the state's counties have been completed.

To compile statewide recreation facilities for the SCORP, IDNR used information from the 1993 IRFI as well as from other sources. Table 6 summarizes recreation acreage and types of facilities by provider, as well as giving a statewide total. The statewide total allows a determination of the statewide per capita supply of land and facilities. Local providers can then compare their per capita supply with the statewide average and determine where their supply falls. Per capita supply is also used to evaluate proposals submitted to the Land and Water Conservation Fund and other IDNR outdoor recreation grant programs.

## Demand Summary

Table 6, derived from IRFI and other facilities plans and surveys, is the best available representation of the state's supply of outdoor recreation lands and facilities. It is an estimated supply based on collected data and provides facility availability. All types of recreation providers are important and fulfill a need in supplying the state's outdoor recreation opportunities.

Snowmobiling is a popular winter activity at many Illinois state parks.



Table 6

### Outdoor Recreation Land and Facilities, by Provider

State population: 12,419,293 (2000 census)	Federal	State	County	Local Park Dist	Local Non-Park Dist	Schools	Quasi Public	Private	Total	Per Capita # per 1,000
<b>ACREAGE</b>	479,065	444,500	187,345	91,884		22,971	11,486	103,370	1,340,621	107.95
<b>WATER BASED FACILITIES</b>										
Fishing Piers	32	168	104	326	248	24	46	1,033	1,981	0.16
Boat Launching Ramps	74	273	124	282	258	17	13	505	1,546	0.12
Marina Slips	1,543	2,645	373	7,662	931	6,498	39	14,189	33,880	2.73
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	0	5	54	642	452	161	176	2,046	3,536	0.28
Swimming Beach (linear ft.)	13,118	42,550	5,851	40,694	11,300	6,584	3,781	86,446	210,324	16.94
<b>HUNTING FACILITIES</b>										
Public Hunting Allowed (acres)	352,145	236,826	9,377	0	4,817	0	0	69,705	672,870	54.18
Waterfowl Blinds	46	1,752	15	37	328	0	0	621	2,799	0.23
<b>OVERNIGHT FACILITIES</b>										
Developed Campsites (full/partial)	2,600	7,500	1,520	890	1,590	0	717	51,238	66,055	5.32
Primitive Campsites	985	688	660	200	160	11	2,639	6,379	11,722	0.94
Equestrian Campsites	1	847	65	30	0	0	0	876	1,819	0.15
Cabins	315	125	72	14	22	97	377	2,853	3,875	0.31
Lodges	0	8	3	19	0	22	109	594	755	0.06
<b>TRAILS (miles)</b>										
Multi-Use Trails	245	1,503	2,297	2,231	430	570	1,386	2,852	11,514	0.93
Hiking Trails	227	1,040	697	450	196	324	1,091	1,685	5,710	0.46
Bicycle Trails	18	300	642	520	150	251	160	1,021	3,062	0.25
Horseback Trails	188	720	170	276	27	136	14	684	2,370	0.19
Physical Fitness Trails (stations)	45	0	100	1,472	446	232	290	186	2,771	0.22
Nature/Interpretive Trails	31	55	205	173	47	376	434	1,009	2,330	0.20
Off-road Vehicle Trails	0	0	2	36	7	0	0	72	117	0.01
Cross-Country Trails	0	357	1,235	1,151	138	318	327	1,432	4,958	0.40
Snowmobile Trails	0	390	232	136	173	0	0	469	1,400	0.11
<b>DAYUSE FACILITIES</b>										
Picnic Shelters	93	577	1,236	3,655	1,961	131	329	1,495	9,477	0.76
Picnic Tables	2,380	19,426	36,596	37,792	17,588	1,593	4,558	30,550	150,483	12.12
Playgrounds	71	390	212	5,563	1,462	216	100	861	8,875	0.72
Interpretive Centers	15	15	45	47	4	9	17	21	173	0.01
<b>SPORT COURTS &amp; FIELDS</b>										
Tennis Courts	25	0	38	3,322	553	985	23	1,163	6,109	0.49
Basketball Courts	8	1	13	3,198	550	263	28	270	4,331	0.35
Volleyball Courts	16	0	64	1,330	217	72	55	383	2,137	0.17
Baseball Fields	1	33	106	2,844	558	301	9	124	3,976	0.32
Softball Fields	14	4	57	3,117	616	378	36	251	4,473	0.36
Football Fields	2	0	2	984	54	225	0	29	1,296	0.10
Soccer Fields	2	0	28	2,289	377	313	33	71	3,113	0.25
Golf Courses (holes)	0	54	0	1,296	558	288	72	8,856	11,124	0.90
Archery Ranges	2	0	0	29	5	10	55	89	190	0.02
Rifle-Pistol Ranges	2	0	2	11	37	7	30	56	145	0.01
Running Tracks	1	0	4	239	41	328	11	30	654	0.05
Ice Rinks	0	0	15	453	33	3	4	11	519	0.04

Sources: Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory, 1993; IDNR Camping Plan, 1998; IDNR Site Trails Plan, 1996; Illinois Trails Inventory, 2001; IAPD, [www.ilparks.org](http://www.ilparks.org), 2003, and personal communication with site managers. Note: because more recent inventories and plans were used for these estimates, some facility numbers are slightly lower than the 1993 Inventory numbers.



*chapter 8*  
**Demand for  
Outdoor Recreation**

**I**DNR uses several sources of information and data to determine the demand for outdoor recreation. These include the recent IDNR survey of *Public Attitudes Toward Open Space Initiatives in Illinois*, the Illinois Association of Park Districts survey, *Statewide Attitudes Toward Open Space Preservation and Outdoor Recreation*, as well as other state and national surveys.

### **IDNR Open Space Survey**

Based on the IDNR open space survey, the most popular recreational activities among Illinois residents are walking, driving/sightseeing, gardening, observing wildlife, and picnicking (all activities done by over 50 percent of respondents). Other popular outdoor

recreation activities include fishing, bicycling, swimming, and hiking. These trends in outdoor recreation activity follow fairly closely with national trends.<sup>11</sup> Over a third of respondents have visited open space between 11-25 times in the last year, and almost a quarter have visited more than 25 times. People from IDNR Region 1 (northwestern Illinois) and Region 3 (east-central Illinois) tended to visit open space more often than people from other regions—64 percent and 65 percent, respectively, have visited open space often or frequently compared to 58 percent statewide. Use of open space also differs for various demographic factors. Those who visit open space most often are male, Caucasian, college educated, higher income household, have children, and are younger than 50 years old (Table 7).

Figure 14

**Popular Adult Outdoor Recreation Activities in Illinois**  
(IDNR Open Space Survey)

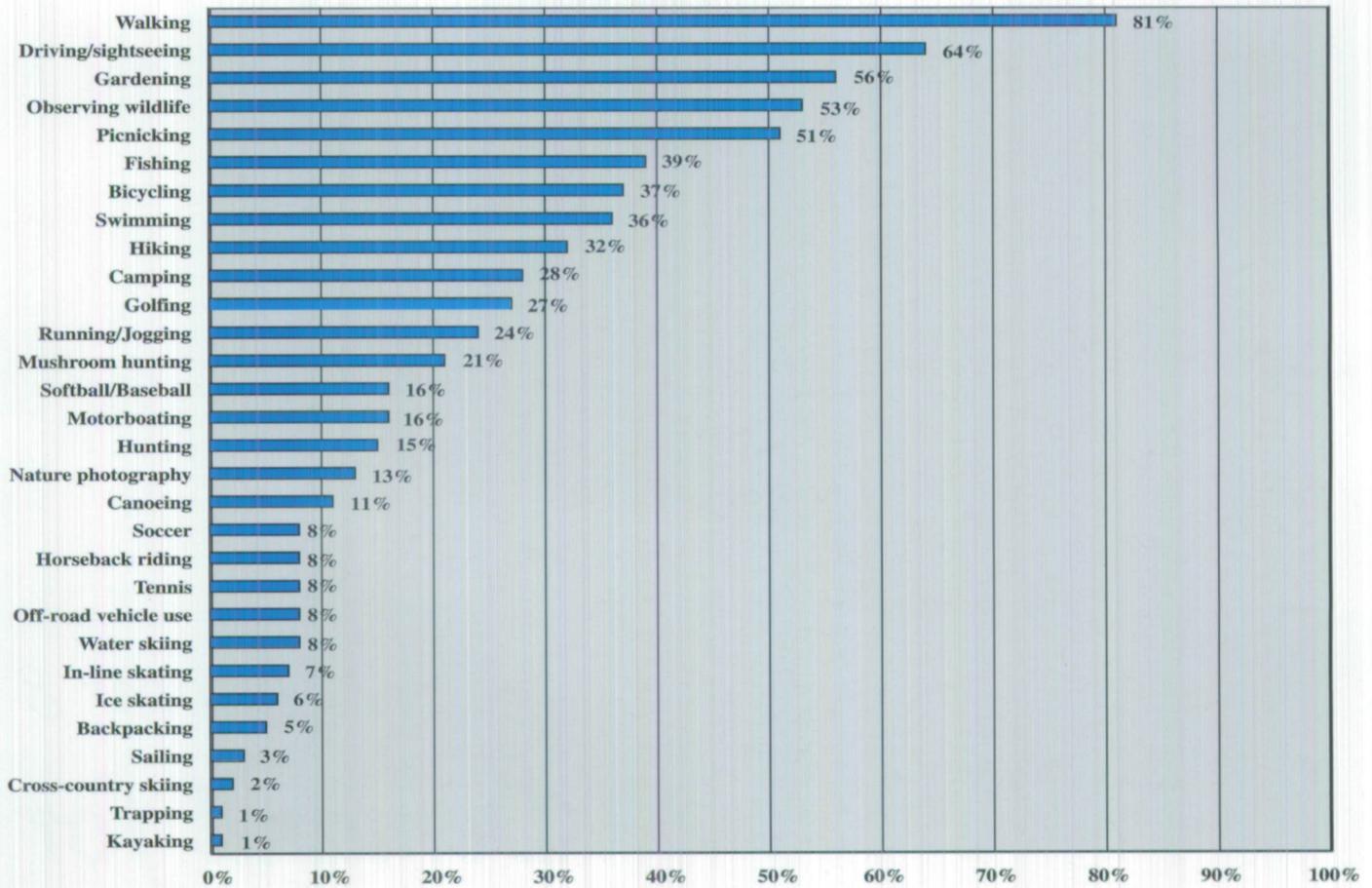


Table 7

**Profile of Most Frequent Users of Open Space**

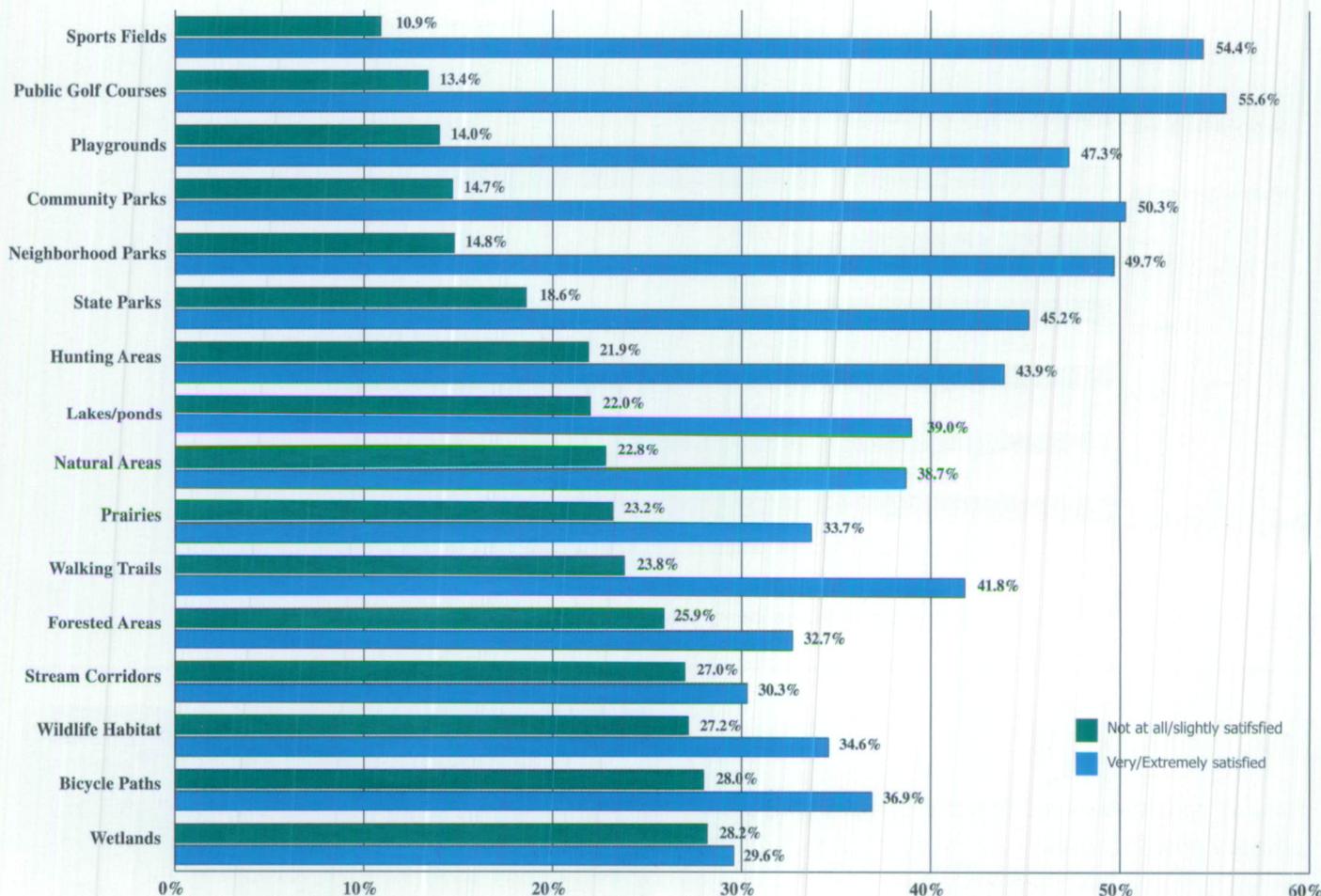
<u>Demographic Factors</u>	<u>Percentage that Use Open Space Often/Frequently</u>	
Gender	Male	63
	Female	54
Ethnicity	Caucasian	65
	All Other	54
Education	High School Diploma	46
	College degree (4 yrs. >)	71
Household Income	\$80,000 >	75
	< \$40,000	47
Number of Children in Household	None	54
	1-4 children	74
IDNR Region Reside in	Region 1 and 3	64
	other regions	57
Age	18-49	72
	50+	52

In terms of satisfaction with the amount of the different types of open space, more people were satisfied than not (Figure 15). More than half of the respondents were satisfied with the amount of golf courses, sports fields, and community parks. Respondents were least satisfied with the amount of undeveloped open space.

Between 23-28 percent said they wanted more wetlands, wildlife habitat, stream corridors, forested areas, prairies, and natural areas. A little more than one-fifth also wanted more walking trails and bicycle paths, two types of developed open space.

Figure 15

### Satisfaction with the Amount of Different Types of Open Space (IDNR Open Space Survey)



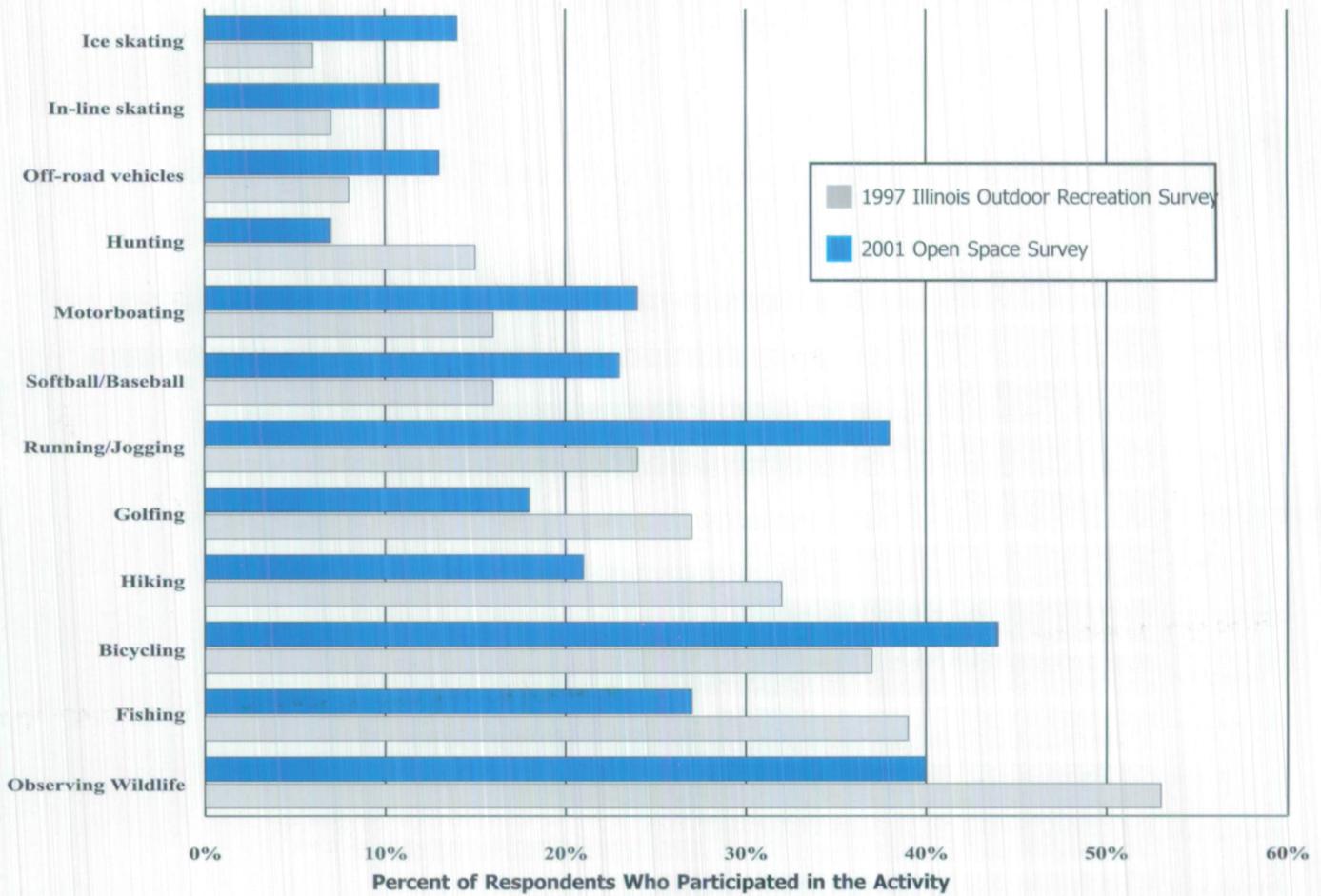
**Comparison to previous surveys** In 1997 the department conducted the Illinois Outdoor Recreation Activities Survey. While this survey cannot be directly compared to the 2001 Open Space Survey (different methodologies were used), participation in several recreational activities appears to have changed. The 2001 survey shows more respondents participating in observing wildlife, fishing, hiking, golfing, and hunting than in the 1997 survey and fewer participating in bicycling, running/jogging, softball/baseball, motorboating, off-road vehicles, in-line skating, and ice

skating (Figure 16).

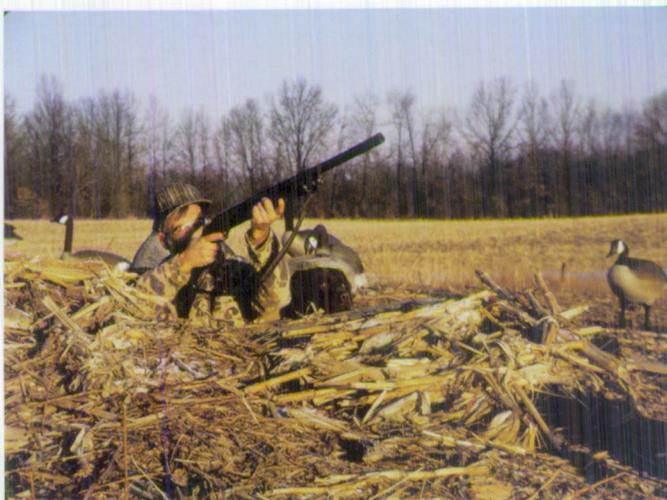
Fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching were also activities included in the 2001 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Survey. Illinois respondents to the federal survey reported far lower rates of participation in these activities than were given for the Illinois surveys. The USFWS survey reported that 27% of Illinois residents participate in wildlife-watching, 13% fish, and 3% hunt; compared to 53%, 39%, and 15% rates, respectively, in the 2001 Open Space Survey.

Figure 16

### Outdoor Recreation Activities that Showed Significant Participation Change Between 1997 and 2001 Surveys



Hunting opportunities are provided at many DNR and privately operated sites.



This lake at Johnson-Sauk Trail State Park supports some of Illinois' 200 species of fish.

## Illinois Association of Park Districts Survey

The IAPD survey shows that parks and forest preserves are rated highly and are being used by most residents. A majority (83 percent) of residents in park district counties had visited local parks in the previous year, and almost half (45 percent) attended a park district program. In terms of the frequency of visits to local parks, the average Illinois resident who lives in a park district county goes to a park 34 times a year (median number of visits is 13). Chicago residents use local parks the most, an average of 46 times a year compared to downstate residents who use local parks 28 times a year, the fewest number of visits (Figure 17). Those most likely to visit local parks include families with children, those not retired, households with incomes above \$50,000, and downstate people who live in urban settings.

Residents of park district counties rate their local park and forest preserve districts very favorably. Parks and forest preserves receive a 12:1 or better “favorable to unfavorable” rating. In comparison, the ratio is much lower for local city government (5:1) and county

government (4:1). Users of local parks also are fairly satisfied with the number and variety of facilities, as well as the cleanliness and safety of the existing facilities.

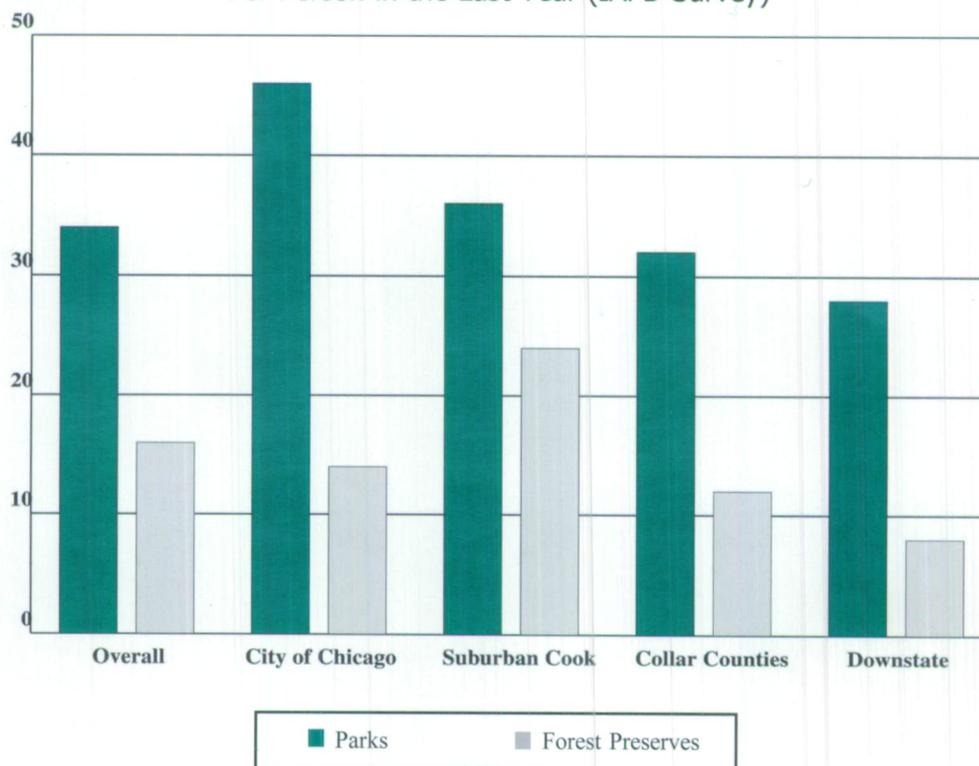
Usage of forest preserves is much lower than parks—50 percent of residents have visited a forest preserve with an average of 16 visits per year. Like the local parks, forest preserves are also rated favorably in terms of the number and variety of forest preserves and the cleanliness and safety of the facilities.

### Survey Summary

Walking for pleasure, driving and sightseeing, observing wildlife, picnicking, fishing, and bicycling are the most popular adult outdoor recreation activities. People are satisfied with most recreation facilities but would like to have more undeveloped open space. Community parks and forest preserves, especially in urban settings, are popular, especially with families. These various surveys provide state and local policy makers with a clear understanding of what people want and need from their outdoor recreation experiences.

Figure 17

**Average Number of Visits to Local Parks and Forest Preserves**  
Per Person in the Last Year (IAPD Survey)





An illustration of three butterflies of various species (including a monarch-like butterfly) perched on a flowering plant with small white blossoms. The illustration is rendered in a light, semi-transparent style, serving as a background for the chapter title.

*chapter 9*  
**Outdoor  
Recreation  
Needs**

**T**o determine statewide outdoor recreation needs the Department considered demographic trends, surveys of outdoor recreation demand, public input, IDNR facility surveys, other natural resource plans, and the current supply of land and facilities. From these it found that the changing makeup of Illinois' population from rural to urban has resulted in a similar change in preferred outdoor recreational pursuits, from such traditional outdoor activities as fishing and hunting to more urbanized activities such as bicycling and pleasure walking. And with 75 percent of Illinois'

population located in the Chicago metropolitan area, it is obvious that new recreation land and facilities should be not only "non-traditional" but also more focused on this large urban area.

In 2001, the Trust for Public Land and the Illinois Association of Park Districts assessed the three- to five-year capital needs of local governments for conservation and recreation lands and facilities.<sup>12</sup> More than 200 IAPD-membership agencies responded to the survey (a 63 percent response rate). The results show that:

- local agencies would need to acquire 43,300 acres, with a projected cost of more than \$1.1 billion, over the next five years to keep up with public demand for parks and open space;
- renovation and/or restoration funding needs for existing parks and recreation facilities in Illinois are estimated to be more than \$540 million; and
- funding needs for new construction of public recreation facilities are estimated at more than \$1.0 billion.

IDNR has also estimated its five-year needs for recreation lands and facilities. To keep up with public demand, the Department would need:

- \$85 million for 40,000 acres,
- \$178 million for restoration and renovation, and
- \$271.1 million for new facilities.

**Consequently, total funding needs for state and local government over the next five years is about \$3 billion.**

### Supply/Demand Matrix for Facility Needs

Since there is no commonly-accepted methodology to calculate the need for specific outdoor recreation facilities, IDNR has developed a simple process that;

1. identifies the relative demand for a particular outdoor recreation activity, compared to other activities;
2. identifies the relative supply of outdoor recreation land and facilities for a given area, compared to other areas of the state; and
3. compares demand and supply to identify the relative need for land and facilities in a given area.

First, using data from recent participation surveys, the demand for a particular outdoor recreation activity is defined as *High* or *Low* if the statewide participation rate for the activity is above or below the median participation rate for all activities surveyed. Second, using data from the Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory, the supply of facilities for the activity in the jurisdiction under consideration (community or county) is defined as *High* or *Low* if the per capita supply in the jurisdiction is above or below the statewide median per

capita supply for the facility. Third, comparing demand and supply results in outdoor recreation needs.

The level of need, from *Low* to *Moderate* to *High*, reflects the need for land or facilities for a particular outdoor recreation activity in a particular jurisdiction. While this process is simple, it helps target funding towards land and facilities for relatively more popular activities in relatively under-supplied areas of the state. The process is also flexible enough to accommodate local conditions that are significantly different from statewide averages.

DEMAND	SUPPLY	
	<i>High</i>	<i>Low</i>
<i>High</i>	Moderate Need	High Need
<i>Low</i>	Low Need	Moderate Need

A hypothetical application of this method is as follows. An Illinois community, Pleasantville, applies to IDNR for a grant to build a swimming pool. From participation surveys, it is determined that the statewide participation rate for *Swimming in Pools* is above the median participation rate for all activities surveyed. Therefore, the demand for this facility is *High*.

From the Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory, it is determined that Pleasantville's per capita supply of swimming pools is below the statewide median per capita supply of swimming pools. Therefore, the supply of swimming pools in Pleasantville is *Low*. The net result is a *High Need* for swimming pools in Pleasantville and the community would receive the maximum score, under outdoor recreation need, for this facility.

In those cases where multiple facilities for multiple activities are proposed, the primary facility will be used to determine outdoor recreation need. In those cases where both demand and supply information are not available or comparable, outdoor recreation need will be determined using only supply information. If neither demand nor supply information is available, for example for a new activity, then outdoor recreation need will be determined by other means.

The median figures for per capita supply and for participation demand are not presented in the SCORP but are used in IDNR's local grant evaluation process.

Three monarch butterflies are depicted in a light, artistic style, appearing to fly around a plant with small white flowers. The butterflies are positioned at different heights and angles, creating a sense of movement. The overall aesthetic is soft and naturalistic.

*chapter 10*  
**Public  
Participation**

**P**ublic involvement is important to outdoor recreation planning because it guides the selection of priorities and provides recommendations for action. Public input comes from many sources: councils and advisory bodies having specific recreational interests, user advocacy groups, special interest organizations, public meetings, and surveys and other studies. The SCORP is a reflection of the following specific sources: Conservation Congress, Illinois Greenways and Trails Council, state site visitors, and the surveys previously discussed—Illinois Open Space Survey, Illinois Association of Park Districts Greenprint Survey, and Statewide Attitudes Toward Open Space Preservation and Recreation. The draft plan was also available for public review.

### **Conservation Congress**

In 1992 IDNR held the first Conservation Congress, an extensive public participation process for IDNR's delivery of resource management and outdoor recreation activities, facilities, and programs. Conservation Congress has become a comprehensive and on-going process, conducted at two to three-year intervals over the past 10 years. At all of the four Conservation Congresses held so far, priorities for the participants included more public land, more outdoor recreational opportunities, and better access to streams. At least three congresses recommended priorities for public land acquisition—for habitat, hunting, protection of threatened and endangered species and natural areas, protection of riparian corridors, and land accessible to population centers.

The Congress has also recommended statewide plans for trails and greenways and improvement and expansion of fish hatcheries. More recently, the focus has been on more public shooting and archery ranges; more river miles available for recreational use, primarily for more water trails; and multiple trail use, primarily to allow horseback riding and mountain bikes. At the last congress, participants recommended that the state provide more land for fur trapping and field trials.

### **Illinois Greenways and Trails Council**

The Illinois Greenways and Trails Council was established to implement a Conservation Congress recommendation. The council provides input on needs and priorities for greenways and trails, as well as other issues, and serves as Illinois' State Trails Advisory Board for the Recreational Trails Program.

Illinois has an abundance of public and private camping facilities, including 80 DNR parks.

### **IDNR Site Visitors**

IDNR continually solicits input from visitors regarding the operation and maintenance of facilities such as campgrounds, hiking and biking trails, picnic areas, interpretation centers, lodging, and concessions. The Office of Land Management receives nearly 2,000 visitor survey cards annually. It uses the information to compile monthly reports for regional offices and for the sites. Every three months it also provides a report on visitor satisfaction to the Governor's office.

### **Public Review of the Draft SCORP**

To obtain public review of the draft SCORP, IDNR contacted the larger advocacy organizations to offer hard copies of the report and invite comment; posted the draft on the Department website; e-mailed constituents to ask for their comment and included a link to the website; placed notices on various electronic list-serves; and issued a press release for the general public.





*chapter 11*  
**SCORP**  
**Priorities**

**T**o determine priorities for this SCORP and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Department considered all of the previous discussion—survey data, demographics, supply, demand, and public input—as well as IDNR’s strategic plan, findings of the Critical Trends Assessment Program, and division plans (forests, fisheries, etc.). Public comments on the draft plan were also solicited and taken into consideration.

The resulting SCORP priorities are divided into three categories:

1. priorities for state projects (sponsored by IDNR),
2. priorities for both state and local projects, and
3. priorities for local projects (sponsored by local units of government such as park districts).

### **State Project Priorities**

**Programmatic Needs** While the Department is able to use special, dedicated capital funds for some types of capital projects, e.g., waterfowl habitat enhancement or natural areas acquisition, these dedicated funds are often limited in scope and purpose and do not allow the Department to respond to statewide programmatic initiatives such as upgrading play equipment or wastewater treatment facilities. LWCF funding can help IDNR respond to needs that are not currently addressed by dedicated capital funds.

For some popular site activities, the Department has identified capital improvement needs through special plans such as the Site Trails Plan and the Camping Plan.

LWCF funding can help meet the capital improvement needs identified in these and future plans.

**New Site Development** Over the past four years the Department has acquired more than 41,200 acres of new lands through the Open Land Trust Program. These lands need basic facilities such as access roads, parking, signage, information kiosks, water, vault toilets, and landscaping. LWCF funding will assist with modest capital improvements and open these new areas to public use.

**State and Local Project Priorities**

**Accessibility and Underserved Populations** The State of Illinois is committed to using the LWCF Program to better meet the outdoor recreation needs of all its citizens. Outdoor recreation sites and facilities should serve all users, regardless of physical ability, race, ethnic background, or income. For example, IDNR is committed to accessibility improvements and has prepared Americans with Disabilities Act Site Compliance Plans for more than 100 of its sites and identified a number of needed accommodations. To date, it has made improvements to facilities, structures, and programs at more than 50 IDNR sites. Local agencies should also ensure their sites and facilities are accessible to all users and that they satisfy the recreation needs of other underserved populations. LWCF funding for acquisition and development of land and facilities that serve these populations can help meet this goal.

**Water Resources** Water—rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds—is closely tied to many forms of outdoor recreation, directly as a setting for outdoor activities such as boating and fishing or as a backdrop to other activities such as picnicking and camping. LWCF funding can help acquire and develop land and facilities to better realize the potential of these important, existing outdoor recreation resources.

**Greenways and Trails** Greenways and trails remain a SCORP priority, with increasing emphasis on connecting existing greenways and trails to create a

statewide network. IDNR manages a number of the state’s major greenways and trails, such as the I&M and Hennepin canals, and works with other agencies and organizations to protect greenways and develop long-distance trails such as the 500-mile Grand Illinois Trail in northern Illinois. The Department also provides financial and technical assistance to agencies and organizations for greenways and trails plans, which identify priority projects for communities, counties, and multi-county regions. LWCF funding can assist with meeting these needs.

**Visitor Information and Conservation Education**

Visitor information and conservation education are an integral part of outdoor recreation, but are too often ignored. These facilities and programs often lead to a greater appreciation of natural resources and an increased willingness to protect the environment, which

*Anyone can fish from handicapped-accessible piers, such as this one at Lake Murphysboro State Park .*



forms the foundation of outdoor recreation. While IDNR has developed a number of visitor centers at its sites, more needs to be done.

Local agencies also play an important role in providing visitor information and conservation education. The new visitor center at Tri-County State Park represents an excellent joint venture between IDNR and the Forest Preserve District of Du Page County to meet this need. LWCF funding should help meet this need in other areas.

**Acquisition** The public has consistently called for both IDNR and local agencies to acquire additional land for open space and outdoor recreation. The Open Land Trust and Natural Areas Acquisition programs have responded to this demand, but more needs to be done, especially as urban and suburban growth accelerates. LWCF funding is essential to meeting this long-standing need. At the local level, it is especially important that agencies acquire basic open space before it is converted to other land uses.

**Natural Areas** Recent surveys and studies described in this plan have demonstrated the public support of natural, undeveloped open space. LWCF funding can assist with the acquisition and appropriate development of natural areas, especially of areas identified through the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory.



Old Mill Creek, Lake County, was an Open Land Trust purchase.

**Wildlife Habitat** Similar to natural areas, the public supports protection of wildlife habitat. LWCF funding can help with acquisition and enhancement of wildlife habitat, especially habitat for threatened and endangered species.

**Wetlands** This plan has documented the significant loss of the state's wetlands. Recently, scientists from the Critical Trends Assessment Program visited 1,000 of the 16,500 emergent wetlands greater than two acres in size that had been identified by the Illinois Wetlands Inventory more than 20 years ago. They discovered that one-third of the sites no longer existed—they had been drained, developed, or planted in row crops. LWCF funding for wetlands acquisition and restoration can help to stop this trend.

## Local Project Priorities

### **Adaptive Reuse and Redevelopment of Urban**

**Lands** This plan has documented the relationship between urban growth and the loss of open space and natural resources. Adaptive re-use/re-development of existing, urbanized lands reduces sprawl, saving open space and natural resources. LWCF funding for acquisition and development of existing urbanized land can help meet this need.

**Local Planning and Coordination** Planning and coordination can increase the extent and diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities by combining the resources of multiple governmental jurisdictions. Outdoor recreation projects that involve local planning and coordination serve as models for this potentially more cost-effective approach to meeting public needs. LWCF funding for acquisition and development projects that reflect local planning and coordination can help meet this objective.

**Basic Facilities** Open space alone cannot meet all outdoor recreation needs. Basic outdoor recreation facilities such as parking and restrooms are essential for most outdoor activities. LWCF funding can assist with the development of these facilities to ensure that it is convenient for residents to use outdoor recreation areas.





*chapter 12*

# *Implementing the Plan: IDNR Outdoor Recreation Grant Programs*

**T**he Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is implemented through IDNR's outdoor recreation programs as well as grant programs that assist local entities in providing local parks, conservation areas, and recreation facilities. The SCORP priorities outlined in the previous chapter apply to the eight grant programs described here. The grant programs operate on a cost reimbursement basis for approved project elements and are available to any unit of local government or special taxing district with statutory authority to acquire, develop, and maintain lands for public parks. In some cases, grants are also available to private, not-for-profit organizations.

The two most significant programs, the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and the state Open Space

Lands Acquisition and Development, are general purpose outdoor recreation grant programs that have comparable objectives and are administered similarly by the Department. The other outdoor recreation grant programs include:

- Bicycle Path Grant Program**
- Snowmobile Trail Establishment Fund**
- Off-Highway Vehicle Recreational Trails Program**
- Federal Recreational Trails Program**
- Local Government Snowmobile Grant Program**
- Boat Access Area Development Grant Program**

Grants are provided on a competitive basis based upon written applications submitted to IDNR by

published deadline dates. Grant manuals provide full information on each program. For more information contact IDNR's Division of Grant Administration, 217/782-7481, or log on to their web site at <http://dnr.state.il.us/ocd/Gaoutnew.htm>.

## Grant Programs

**Land and Water Conservation Fund** The federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program was the first outdoor recreation grant program undertaken in Illinois. It provides up to 50 percent cost share and to date has helped fund nearly 390 local acquisition projects and approximately 300 local development projects, totaling nearly \$109 million in grant assistance. Grant recipients range from small communities having less than 1,000 population to large urban agencies serving millions of citizens. IDNR seeks to balance funding among the many diverse communities throughout the state.

In addition, IDNR has utilized \$35 million of LWCF monies for state land acquisition and development projects and outdoor recreation planning initiatives. Although the state-side portion of the LWCF program was not funded from 1995-1999, funding was restored in 2000. Currently, Illinois is receiving an annual apportionment of approximately \$4.5 million for state and local projects. At present, several federal legislative initiatives are being debated that would significantly increase current state-side funding levels and alter or expand the focus of the program.

The Department's current policy is to use federal LWCF dollars for state capital projects and local land acquisition projects only. A maximum LWCF grant award limit of \$750,000 per local acquisition project has been established with the exception of the City of Chicago which has a \$2.3 million limit and Cook County which has a \$1.15 million grant limit.

Local project proposals submitted to the Department

for funding consideration are evaluated and prioritized through the "Open Project Selection Process" described at the end of this chapter.

### **Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Program**

During the 17-year history of the OSLAD program (since 1986), more than \$174.6 million has helped to fund more than 800 local park development projects and nearly 180 park/open space acquisition projects. It is DNR's largest local recreation grant program and focuses on providing basic close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities, including land for parks and facilities such as ball fields and playgrounds. It provides up to 50 percent funding; its funding source is a portion of the state's real estate transfer tax.

OSLAD also supports renovation of existing recreational facilities, since aging infrastructure has become a major problem in many communities.



The Effingham Area Kluthe Memorial Pool, located in Evergreen Hollow Park, was developed by the Effingham Community Park District as an OSLAD project.

Applications may be submitted May 1 - July 1 of each year. Local project proposals submitted for funding consideration are also evaluated and prioritized through the "Open Project Selection Process" described at the end of this chapter.

**Bicycle Path Grant Program** The Bicycle Path Grant Program assists with up to 50 percent of the costs for acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of public, non-motorized bicycle paths and directly related support facilities. Illinois Vehicle Code fees provide funds for the program.

The program's main objective is the development of long distance bicycle paths and trails for safe and enjoyable use by the public. Bike path applications may be submitted January 1 - March 1 of each year. Funding preference is given to projects that:

- Acquire land or long term/permanent easements for linear corridors;
- Propose development of a bicycle trail system, particularly long distance trails, connector trails linking several existing trails, or multiple use trails;
- Are identified in state, regional, or local bikeway/trail plans and/or outdoor recreation plans, comprehensive plans, etc.;
- Propose quality bike path facilities readily accessible to major population centers or propose initial creation of bike path facilities in a high demand area;
- Have minimal adverse environmental and social impacts;
- Propose initial development of bicycle path facilities at the project site (trail renovation projects are a lower priority than new trail construction);
- Have scenic and outdoor recreation quality and offer a diversity of trail user experiences, user amenities, convenient access, connectivity to other public lands, compatibility with adjacent lands, or which resolve an existing trail user safety issue; and
- Have long term operations and maintenance capability clearly demonstrated by the local sponsor.

Ping Tom Memorial Park in Chicago, developed to serve the Chinese community, was the first of several planned riverfront parks south of Chicago's "Loop."



### **Off-Highway Vehicle Recreational Trails**

**Program** The Illinois Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) grant program, established by the Recreational Trails of Illinois Act, can provide up to 100 percent funding to local governments and private organizations for the acquisition and development of lands for public OHV areas and trails. The program is financed from revenues derived from vehicle title fees and public access stickers. Applications may be submitted January 1 - March 1 of each year. Funding preference will be given to projects that:



- Propose long distance, integrated, intra- and inter-county trails or large scramble areas rather than short, isolated trails or small scramble areas;
- Propose initial development of OHV facilities. Special consideration will be given to those projects representing initial requests for funding assistance in a county;
- Promote multiple outdoor recreation use of the project site;
- Are located in areas (counties) of high demand as determined by population and the number of registered OHV's in the area;
- Have minimal adverse environmental and social impact; and
- Provide the most long term, stable management potential.

### **Snowmobile Trail Establishment Fund**

Funded from snowmobile registration fees, this program is not intended for local governments but for incorporated private snowmobile clubs in Illinois. It provides up to 100 percent project funding. Clubs may develop and maintain snowmobile trails and related facilities on private land for public snowmobiling. Applications may be submitted March 1 - May 1 of each calendar year. Funding preference will be given to projects that:

- Promote long distance, integrated, intra- and inter-county trails rather than short, isolated trails;
- Promote trails linking public lands having existing snowmobile trails/facilities;
- Propose initial development of snowmobiling facilities in a county. Special consideration will also be given to those projects representing initial requests for funding assistance from a county;
- Have minimal adverse environmental and social impact; and
- Are located in areas (counties) of high demand as determined by the number of registered snowmobiles in the area.

**Federal Recreational Trails Program** The federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP) was established by the National Recreational Trails Fund Act. It provides up to 80 percent matching funds to federal, state, and local units of government and private organizations for acquisition and development of motorized and non-motorized trails open to the public. The 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) includes funding for the program for federal fiscal

years 1998-2003. The National Recreational Trails Fund Act requires States to identify priorities for the RTP in the SCORP, or in a separate State Trails Plan. Illinois' priorities for the RTP are developed by IDNR with input from the Illinois Greenways and Trails Council. The Council is the State Trails Advisory Board for the RTP, as required by the Act. Applications may be submitted January 1 - March 1 of each year. RTP projects are evaluated using the following priorities:

- **Project need**
  - **Trail significance:** Is the proposed trail project a segment of a national, state, regional or local trail? Special consideration is given to trails that are segments of the American Discovery Trail or Grand Illinois Trail.
  - **Geographic distribution of the type of trail use:** Are there existing trails that provide for the same trail use(s) as the proposed trail within the same county, area, region, etc.? Special consideration is given to hiking, cross-country skiing, equestrian, mountain biking, and water trails.
  - **Population served:** How many users will the proposed trail serve?
- **Project concept/quality**
  - **Type of project:** Is the proposal for new acquisition or development, environmental restoration, or support facilities or amenities? Special consideration is given to new acquisition or development.
  - **Trail length.**
  - **Diversity of trail uses.**
  - **Scenic quality.**
  - **Availability of support facilities or amenities.**
  - **Project sponsor's ability to maintain the trail.**
- **Environmental suitability:** Is the proposed trail project appropriate for the corridor's land use, soils, etc.? Are there negative impacts on natural resources?
- **Local support.**
- **Local financial contribution.**
- **Overall program suitability:** Is the RTP the most appropriate grant program, given IDNR's other grant programs?
- **Project sponsor's history with IDNR grant programs:** What is the sponsor's past performance on grant projects? Does the sponsor maintain their existing facilities?

For specific information on the RTP grant program, go to <http://dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newrtp2.htm>.

**Local Government Snowmobile Grant**

**Program** The snowmobile grant program provides up to 50 percent funding for construction and rehabilitation of trails and facilities for public snowmobiling, up to 90 percent funding for the acquisition of linear corridors for trail development, and up to 100 percent funding for the purchase of snowmobile equipment necessary to maintain or patrol snowmobile trails. The program is funded from snowmobile registration fees.

The program supports all activities which enhance public snowmobiling opportunities: trail acquisition, trail development, trail grooming, and equipment for local agency patrol. Local snowmobile applications may be submitted March 1 - May 1 of each year. Funding preference is given to projects that:

- Propose linear trail development, especially well developed long distance trails, connector trails linking several existing trails, or multiple use trails;
- Are located in areas having adequate snow cover and exhibiting high demand as determined by the number of registered snowmobiles in the project service area;
- Propose high quality snowmobile facilities readily accessible to major population centers and highways in the state or propose initial establishment of snowmobile facilities in a high demand area;
- Have minimal adverse environmental and social effects;
- Propose initial development of snowmobile facilities at the project site; and
- Have documented support from the snowmobiling public.



**Boat Access Area Development Grant**

**Program** The program provides up to 100 percent funding for construction projects and up to 90 percent assistance for land acquisition. The program's main purpose is to increase access to public waters by providing more public boat launching ramps, canoe access areas, and facilities that support their use, including courtesy docks, parking, and lighting. The program also encourages water trail development. Funds are derived from the marine motor fuel tax and from boat and canoe registration fees. Applications may be submitted July 1 - September 1 each year. Funding preference is given to projects that:



- Are located on large bodies of water;
- Receive high use and serve high numbers of registered boaters;
- Demonstrate site suitability for the proposed uses; and
- Address various special considerations, e.g., local financial contribution, maintenance capability, no-fee public use.

**Open Land Trust Program** The Open Land Trust (OLT) Program was authorized for a four-year period beginning in FY 2000. While it has officially ended, given the loss of open space and the need and interest in outdoor recreation, a continuation of this or a similar program is needed. In addition to providing a funding source for state (IDNR) acquisitions, it provided eligible units of local government grant assistance to acquire land from willing sellers for conservation purposes, public open space, and natural resource-related outdoor recreation. Funding assistance up to 50 percent of eligible acquisition costs, or 90 percent for agencies qualifying as “economically disadvantaged”, was available. The maximum grant award available for any single project in a given year was \$2.0 million and a conservation easement had to be granted to IDNR for all lands acquired with OLT funding.

During the four years of the program, \$ 63.6 million was provided to local agencies for the acquisition/preservation of 8,735+/- acres of land. Funding preference was given to projects that:

- **Helped protect or enhance natural areas, endangered/threatened species habitat, wetlands, Illinois surface waters, fish and wildlife habitat areas, and linear greenways;**
- **Served disadvantaged populations;**
- **Were located in communities that fall below the statewide average supply of open space and natural resource related outdoor recreation needs on a per capita basis;**
- **Demonstrated consistency with adopted local plans and supported by public participation in the planning and/or project proposal process;**
- **Demonstrated site suitability and had high quality natural resource features;**
- **Were identified as part of a management/use or site plan based on sound resource stewardship principles; and**
- **Addressed special considerations, e.g., justified open space needs, the land was under demonstrable threat of conversion, economic revitalization, increased open space in a “high density” urban area.**

## Open Project Selection Process

The Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) is essentially a system of review used to evaluate and prioritize project proposals that compete for grant funds. Although created primarily for LWCF and OSLAD, all outdoor recreation grant proposals are evaluated through this or a similar process. LWCF and OSLAD use only the OPSP criteria, while the other programs use OPSP in addition to the criteria specific for each program. Using the OPSP ensures an “open and fair” project selection process and assures that all eligible local sponsors and the public are fully aware of priorities and guidelines for IDNR outdoor recreation grant programs.

The evaluation criteria are weighted and designed to make the selection of projects objective and responsive to statewide and local outdoor recreation priorities and needs. In general, the criteria relate directly to:

### **SCORP Priorities- Statewide outdoor recreation priorities specified in this SCORP document (see Chapter 11)**

#### For State Projects

- Programmatic Needs
- New Site Development

#### For State and Local Projects

- Accessibility and Underserved Populations
- Water Resources
- Greenways and Trails
- Visitor Information and Conservation Education
- Acquisition
- Natural Areas
- Wildlife Habitat
- Wetlands

#### For Local Projects

- Adaptive Reuse and Redevelopment of Urban Lands
- Local Planning and Coordination
- Basic Facilities

### **Local Planning Priorities - Need for the outdoor recreation land and/or facilities as identified through SCORP and local planning efforts**

Other evaluation criteria assess a proposal in terms of public support and priorities/needs identified in local plans or other public initiatives.

### **Project Concept and Environmental and Site Feasibility - Overall quality of the proposed project concept as well as environmental and site suitability considerations**

These criteria insure that projects provide high quality, environmentally appropriate outdoor recreation opportunities. Projects should:

- Be well designed.
- Provide diverse outdoor recreation opportunities appropriate for the site.
- Provide flood control benefits or use in flood plain open space (e.g., acquires flood plain land or provides flood-proof facilities in a flood plain).
- Be suited to site’s topography, soils, and drainage.
- Be suited to adjacent land use.
- Be accessible.
- Provide appropriate support facilities and amenities.
- Incorporate energy conservation techniques.

### **Administrative Considerations - Administrative considerations including financial need, operation & maintenance capabilities of the project sponsor, special populations served, and previous IDNR funding assistance.**

Evaluation criteria also consider miscellaneous factors that enhance the need for funding. These include projects that:

- Involve donation of land.
- Present a unique opportunity that has widespread public support.
- Represent initial development of a proposed park.
- Have sponsors that have received less than fair share of OSLAD/LWCF and other grant assistance.

Other evaluation criteria consist of administrative considerations of past performance, maintenance or application adequacy:

- Past performance in completing projects.
- Ability to maintain the project site or facility.
- Application and information response time.
- Unresolved violation regarding previous grant (automatic application ineligibility).



# *Appendix*



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
207 STATE CAPITOL, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

ROD BLAGOJEVICH

GOVERNOR

Mr. Ernest Quintana, Acting Regional Director  
Midwest Region  
National Park Service  
1709 Jackson Street  
Omaha, NE 68102-2571

March 31, 2003

Dear Mr. Quintana:

Enclosed for your consideration is the **Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2003-2008**. I approve this document as Illinois' official statewide outdoor recreation plan.

There has been ample opportunity for public participation in this plan. Various public involvement mechanisms, such as advisory councils and surveys, helped shape the plan and its priorities, and a public review period was conducted.

This plan, prepared by the Department of Natural Resources, continues the SCORP tradition in Illinois. It is an informational and a policy document. It specifically provides direction for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program and our related outdoor recreation local grant programs.

I hope you agree that this SCORP demonstrates Illinois' continuing commitment to providing high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities today and creating a legacy of lands and facilities for the future.

Five copies are enclosed, as requested by Midwest Region Office staff. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rod Blagojevich".

Rod J. Blagojevich  
Governor

RJB:DNR:MG

Enclosures: SCORP, five copies



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

MIDWEST REGION

1709 JACKSON STREET

OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68102-2571

IN REPLY REFER TO:

630.1.5B (MWR-CRSP/G)  
IllinoisHonorable Rod Blagojevich  
Governor of Illinois  
207 State Capitol  
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Blagojevich:

We have received the final copy of the "Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan" (SCORP) along with your assurance that public participation occurred during development of the plan. We are hereby approving the plan.

Our approval of the SCORP allows for Illinois's continued eligibility in the Land and Water Conservation Fund program through December 31, 2008. We hope that the implementation of this plan will be beneficial to Illinois's outdoor recreation needs and that additional efforts to develop an ongoing, effective, and comprehensive outdoor recreation planning program will proceed in a timely and efficient manner.

If you have any question, please contact Jim Krejci at 402-221-7282.

Sincerely,

F. A. Calabrese  
Acting Regional Director

RECEIVED

APR 08 2003

Dept. of Natural Resources  
Grant Administration

Table 8

## LWCF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT STATE SITES, 1966 - 1984

SITE	PROJECT	YEAR SITE	PROJECT	YEAR
Ayers Sand Prairie State Natural Area	Acquisition	1972	Mackinaw River State Fish & Wildlife Area	1978
Beall Woods State Park	Acquisition	1966	Manito Prairie Nature Preserve	1981
Beaver Dam State Park	Sanitary Station	1983	Margaret C. Carlson State Natural Area	1981
Berryville Shale Glade Nature Preserve	Acquisition	1981	Marissa Woods Nature Preserve	1981
Big Bend Conservation Area	Acquisition	1972	Massasauga Prairie Nature Preserve	1981
Buffalo Rock State Park	Guard Rails	1983	Matthiesen State Park	1979
Burton Cave Nature Preserve	Acquisition	1981	Meredosia Hill Prairie Nature Preserve	1981
Buttonland Swamp State Natural Area	Acquisition	1981	Mississippi Palisades State Park*	1975
Castle Rock State Park*	Acquisition	1970	Momence Wetlands State Natural Area	1981
Cave Creek Glade Nature Preserve	Acquisition	1981	Moraine Hills State Park*	1972
Chain O'Lakes State Park*	Campground	1971	Morrison Rockwood State Park*	1979
Chestnut Hill State Natural Area	Acquisition	1981	Pere Marquette State Park*	1968
Dean Hill State Natural Area	Acquisition	1981	Ramsey Lake State Park	1971
Devil's Property State Natural Area	Acquisition	1981	Randolph County Conservation Area Roads	1979
Donnelly-DePue Wildlife Area	Coleman Lake Acquisition	1983	Reavis Spring Hill Prairie State Natural Area	1972
Eagle Creek State Park*	Acquisition	1972	Red Hills State Park	1971
Ferne Clyffe State Park	Campground Development	1971	Redwing Slough State Natural Area	1975
Franklin Creek State Park	Phase 1 Acquisition	1978	Rend Lake	1972
Giant City State Park*	Acquisition	1967	Rock Cave State Natural Area	1981
Goose Lake Prairie*	Acquisition	1981	Rock Cut State Park*	1971
Hanover Bluff Nature Preserve	Acquisition	1981	Sam Parr State Park	1967
Hazlet State Park	Development	1972	Sand Prairie Scrub Oak State Natural Area	1981
Hennepin Canal State Park	Shoreline Restoration	1984	Shabbona Lake State Park*	1971
Hooper Branch Savanna Nature Preserve	Acquisition	1981	Shick Shack Sand Pond Nature Preserve	1981
Horseshoe Lake State Park*	Acquisition	1972	Spring Hill Farm Fen	1981
Illinois Beach State Park*	Campground	1971	Starved Rock State Park*	1975
Jackson Slough Woods State Natural Area	Acquisition	1981	Stemler Cave Woods State Natural Area	1981
Jubilee College State Park*	Acquisition	1969	Volo Bog State Natural Area	1981
Julius J. Knobeloch Woods Nature Preserve	Acquisition	1981	Walnut Point State Park	1981
Kankakee River State Park*	Acquisition	1967	Washington County Conservation Area	1971
Lake Le-Aqua-Na State Park	Campground	1971	Wayne Fitzgerald State Park	1975
Lake Renwick Rookery State Natural Area	Acquisition	1984	Weldon Springs State Park*	1969
Lincoln Trail State Park*	Campground	1971	White Pines State Park	1983
Little Black Slough Nature Preserve	Acquisition	1981	Wolf Road Prairie State Natural Area	1981

\* - Multiple projects

## SCORP Report Notes

- <sup>1</sup> A recent report, *The Impact of Parks and Open Space on Property Values and the Property Tax Base*, John L. Crompton (2000), [www.rpts.tamu.edu/faculty/PropertyValue.pdf](http://www.rpts.tamu.edu/faculty/PropertyValue.pdf) found a positive relationship between property values and proximate open space. In a review of 25 recent studies, 20 found a positive relationship and generally suggest an increase in property values of 20 percent. However, the exact magnitude of this impact will vary depending on the size and attractiveness of the open space, whether the site is well maintained, and several other factors.
- <sup>2</sup> Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, "Estimated State and Federal Lands for Recreation: State-by-State Listings (1990). The study estimated that Illinois has 74.4 acres/capita of state and federal recreational land.
- <sup>3</sup> National Park Trust, "Saving the Legacy of the National System of Parks" (2000). The study defines "public conservation lands" as local, state, and federal owned land for parks, forests, refuges, wilderness and other publicly managed land.
- <sup>4</sup> Based on analysis by Southwick Associates ([www.southwickassociates.com](http://www.southwickassociates.com)). Hunting and fishing economic impact numbers are based on 2001 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service survey; wildlife-watching numbers are based on 1996 survey (wildlife watching impacts are converted to 2000 dollars).
- <sup>5</sup> The expenditures reported are greater than those reported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Sportsmen often attributed purchases to both fishing and hunting (especially vehicles and big-ticket items). These items were not included in the Service's hunting expenditure estimates. Such items were included above by prorating each item's cost based on each respondent's total days of hunting and fishing activity.
- <sup>6</sup> The 2001 FWS survey wildlife-watching activity days estimate is 7,656,000.
- <sup>7</sup> University of Illinois, Illinois Natural History, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, *Public Attitudes Toward Open Space Initiatives in Illinois* (October 2002). Survey of 1,000 adult Illinois residents from each of the five Department regions for their views on and support for state funding for open space. Questionnaires were mailed in March and April 2002; approximately 40 percent were returned. They included questions on the respondent's community, their importance and satisfaction with open space, the need and support for open space acquisition, general opinions on open space, and participation in various outdoor recreation activities. Open space was explicitly defined as "natural areas, parks and outdoor recreation areas, wildlife habitat, lakes and streams." Agricultural lands were not included as open space.
- <sup>8</sup> Richard Day Research, Inc., for the Illinois Association of Park Districts, *Statewide Attitudes Toward Open Space Preservation and Outdoor Recreation* (June 2002). A telephone survey of a random statewide sample (an over sample of 202 in the Chicago Metro area) of 1,203 heads of households (registered voters) was done in April 2002 about their attitudes on open space and recreation. The data were weighted to reflect the statewide distribution by region, gender, race, and age. Assuming no sample bias, the overall margin of error is +/- 3 percent (at the 95 percent confidence level). The sample was analyzed for regional differences among residents in Chicago-suburban Cook County, suburban collar counties, north downstate, central downstate, and south downstate.
- <sup>9</sup> CTAP used the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's 816 watersheds as the geographic unit for evaluation.
- <sup>10</sup> Openlands Project, "Under Pressure: Land Consumption in the Chicago Region, 1998-2028 (January 1999).
- <sup>11</sup> Based on review of the 2000 National Survey of Recreation and the Environment, conducted by USDA Forest Service and NOAA, which includes a survey of outdoor recreation participation.
- <sup>12</sup> *Illinois Land At Risk: A Statewide Assessment of Public Park and Green Space Needs*, The Trust for Public Land, Illinois Association of Park Districts, 2002.

